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LITTLE BOY
IN THE
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CHURCH**

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FLUNG THEIR
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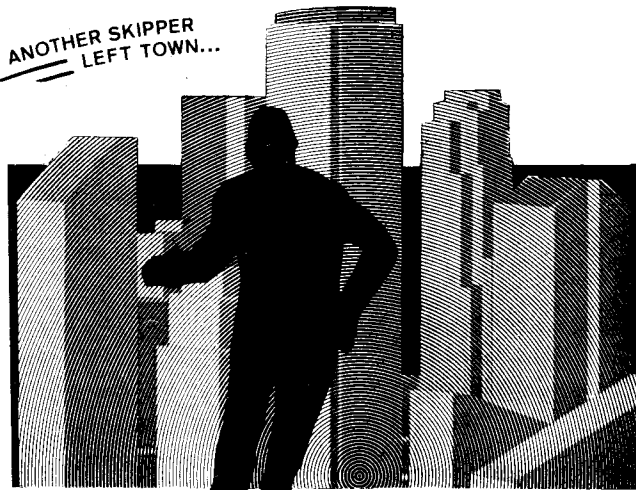


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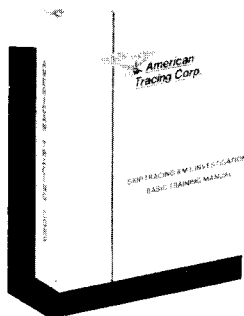
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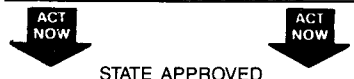
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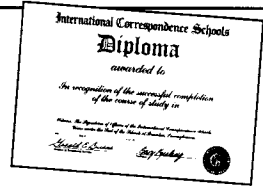
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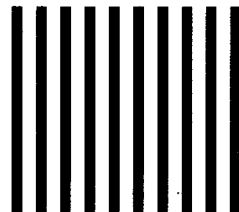
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120 FATAL

Brutal assault doesn't begin to describe the stab wounds inflicted. Incredibly, the killer stabbed Beverly for a period of 10 to 30 minutes and she actually lived through the first 80 jabs!

by DON LASSETER

WHEN Hal Ibisson started his daily work routine on Wednesday, December 17, 1987, he had no way of knowing it would turn out to be a day that would stick in his memory forever.

Ibisson's pickup truck bounced heavily as he turned from smooth, wet pavement onto the muddy, pothole-riddled ruts that served as a roadway through a large oil-well field. The 15 acres of open, rough terrain were surrounded by the urban sprawl of Huntington Beach, California.

Cold gusts of wind blew from the pounding surf just across Pacific Coast Highway. Drizzling rain kept the truck's windshield wipers working full time. Ibisson wrestled the pickup across a deep culvert, past a row of tall evergreen shrubs, and braked to a halt. As he and his partner emerged from the truck to begin inspecting the oil wells, Ibisson glanced back toward the shrubs. A sudden sense of dread chilled him. At first, he thought he had seen a large doll lying in a shallow dugout between two of the plants. But as he drew closer, horror wrenched the pit of his stomach.

The nearly nude body of a petite woman was lying on her back in the



Beverly Holzmilller loved to party but just said "no" to casual sex. A spurned lover reacted brutally to her refusal.

dugout. The damage to her body made it obvious that her death had not been pretty.

As his partner stood guard over the body, Ibisson raced to the nearest telephone to report what they had discovered. It was 1:50 p.m.

Officer William Morris of the Huntington Beach Police Department re-

ceived the radio call. Within minutes he was at the site of the discovery. Verifying that the report was neither a hoax nor an error, Morris immediately called for the homicide roll-out team.

Consisting of six officers and a supervisor, the team arrived promptly, followed by the crime scene investigation unit. The officers cordoned off the area with the yellow tape universally used by law enforcement personnel.

Homicide Investigator Richard C. "Hoop" Hooper, of the Huntington Beach Detective Bureau's Homicide Unit, headed up the investigation. Hooper's youthful, unlined face, crowned by thick dark hair trimmed in a classic flattop, belied his 18 years of law enforcement experience, six of those on the homicide team.

Kneeling near the woman's body, Hooper began a cursory examination. The victim was lying on her back, legs fully extended. Her right hand reposed on her stomach while her left hand, arm bent at the elbow, extended above her head. A red sweater, still encasing her shoulders, stretched behind her neck.

Except for the sweater and a bra, which was pulled down below her breasts and slightly twisted, she was nude. She was quite slim, a little over five feet tall and weighing about 100 pounds. Detective Hooper felt anger begin to well up inside him as the sheer

THRUSTS WITH A TINY, WEIRD WEAPON!

brutality of the victim's death became apparent.

Severe bruises marred what had once been an attractive face. The flesh around the victim's left eye was swollen and caked with dried blood. Contusions, abrasions, and bruises marked her mouth, buttocks, left thigh, and knees. Her left breast bore a three-inch curved wound. Other bruises indicated that she had been raped.

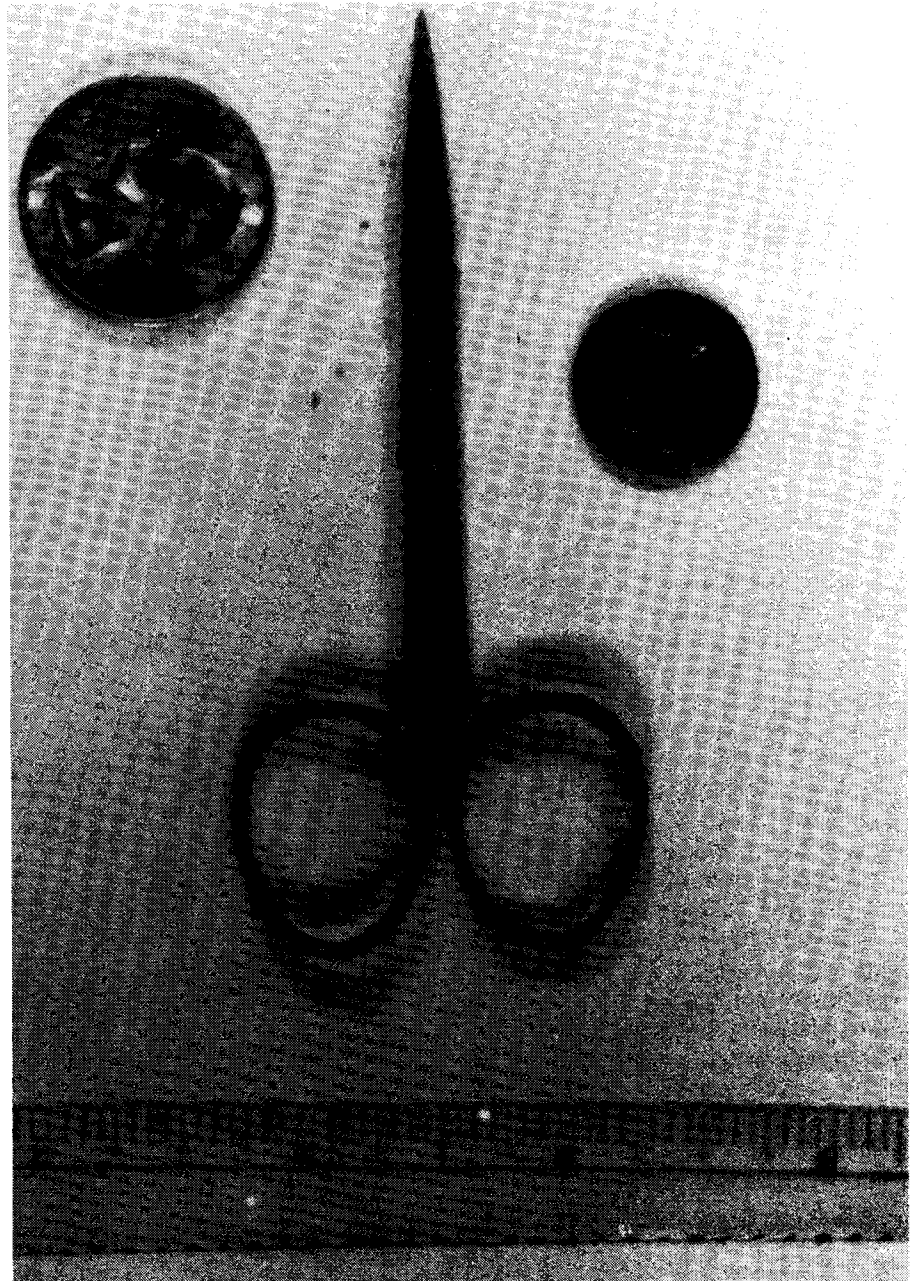
But what Hooper found most appalling was the multiplicity of small, open puncture wounds. Closer examination would subsequently reveal that the victim had been stabbed 120 times! Most of the punctures had bled profusely, but some of them had not bled at all. The wounds were all on the left side of her body, extending from her temple to her abdomen.

"Why?" Hooper asked himself softly. "Why would any human being inflict such cruelty on another person?" The literal overkill didn't make sense.

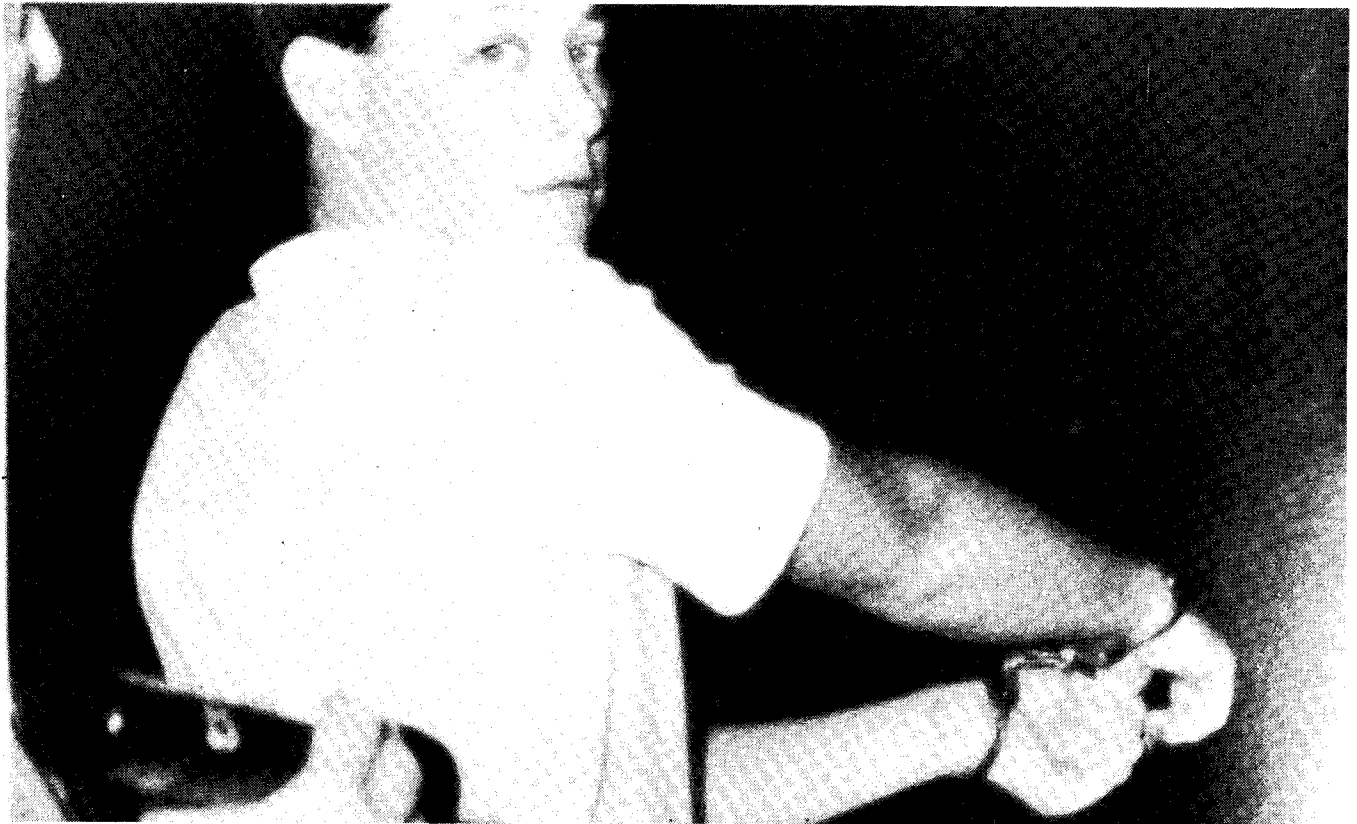
The investigation team meticulously sifted the surrounding area for any evidence. They found a pair of blood-stained black jeans lying in the mud 10 feet away. The jeans apparently belonged to the victim, as did the knee-high black boots with three-inch heels found near her feet. Wadded beneath the victim's back was a yellow, hooded sweat shirt imprinted with the word "Catalina."

But the incessant rain continued to fall, hindering the probers' efforts and decreasing the chance of finding anything that might help solve this increasingly bizarre puzzle.

The investigators continued, however, to search with dogged determination. A nearly imperceptible glint of reflected light caught the attention of



Police retrieved this 4-inch pair of manicure scissors from the murder scene. The tiny weapon is one of the strangest ever encountered in a California murder case.



Robert Allen Carter was taken to the murder scene where he willingly reconstructed the events leading to Beverly's death.

one of the officers. About 14 inches from the victim's body, at her chest level, he saw a small object almost obscured by the mud and water. Cautiously probing into the mud, the officer pulled out a small pair of manicure scissors that had been stabbed into the ground. He carefully placed the scissors into an evidence bag.

Detective Hooper took a close look at the scissors. Incredulously, he asked, "Can this be the weapon? Would anyone use this to inflict so many wounds on her?" The object looked so small, so harmless, so benign. The scissors were quite flimsy and less than four inches long. If this was a murder weapon, it would be the most bizarre and unusual one ever seen by Hooper.

Flashes of bright light illuminated the gray afternoon as one of the forensic specialists began to photograph the crime scene. He took color shots of the victim from various angles and multiple pictures of the scissors, clothing, and surrounding terrain.

Despite their prodigious efforts, the team was unable to find any fingerprints, footprints, or any other clues that might point to a suspect or help identify the victim. There were not even any tire tracks to suggest whether the perpetrator had walked or driven into the field.

Nor were there any marks to tell whether the victim had been dragged to the spot or killed where she lay. If the killer had left any such evidence, the rain had long since washed it away. Detective Hooper realized this was not going to be the easiest case of his career.

The immediate challenge facing Hooper was to identify the victim. The clothing found near the body contained



Sleuths had trouble buying Carter's story that he and Beverly had consensual sex in this alley on a rain-drenched night.

nothing to help accomplish this task. He could recall no missing-person report matching her description. In the absence of any other clues, Hooper hoped that her fingerprints might lead to her identity. Since death had occurred just a few hours before discovery of the body, decomposition would not be a problem. A forensic specialist obtained a full, clear set of the victim's fingerprints.

On the following morning, Thursday, the first piece of the puzzle fell into place. Hooper received a telephone call reporting that the fingerprints had, indeed, revealed the victim's identity. Her name was Beverly Alexandria Holzmilller, age 47. Her most recent address was less than two miles from Hooper's office.

Wasting no time, Detective Hooper drove to the listed address. Neighbors in the apartment building informed him that Holzmilller had relatives living in Huntington Beach.

One of the most difficult duties of a police officer is to notify the survivors of a family member's death, especially in the case of a homicide. There is no easy or comforting way to do it. But it is an integral part of the job, and Detective Hooper accomplished it with the smooth professionalism that comes with experience.

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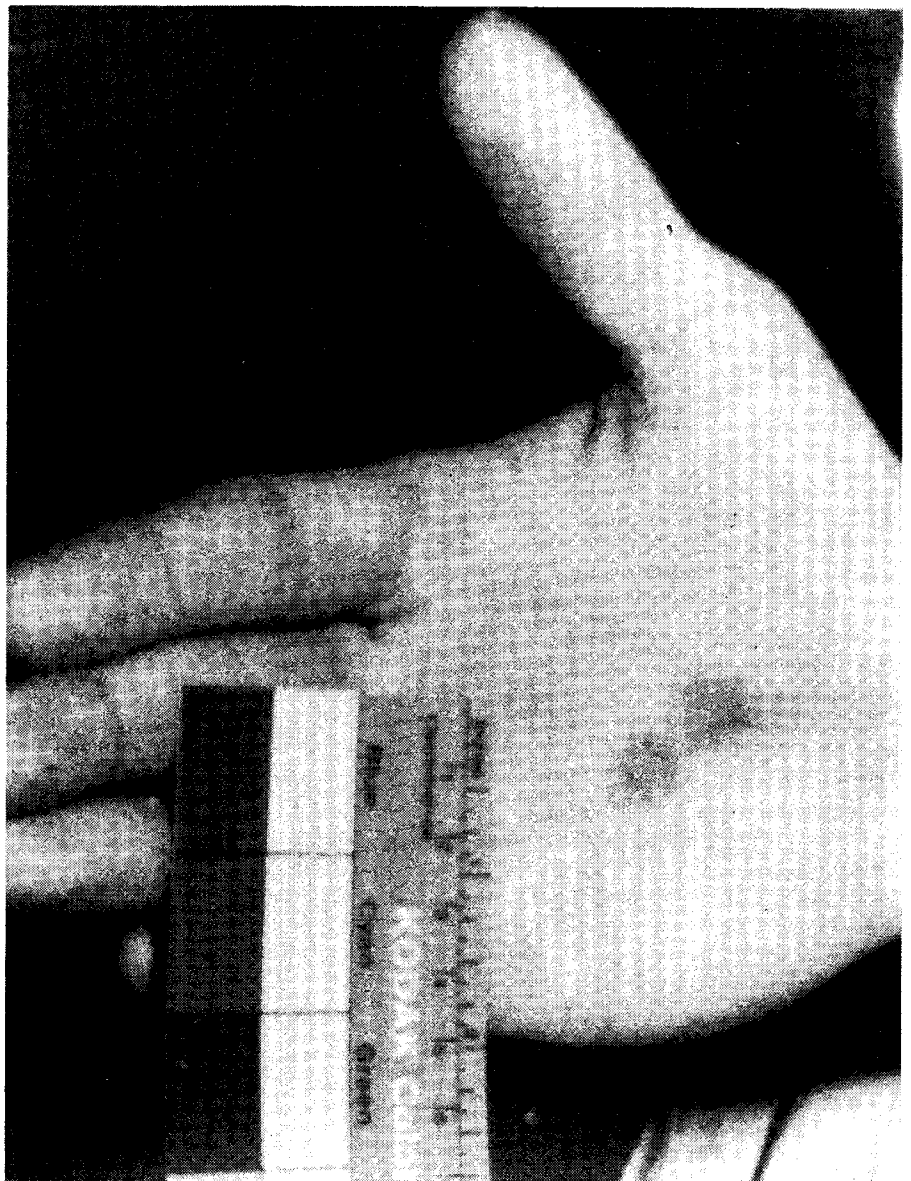


Despite formidable obstacles, Deputy District Attorney Pat Donahue was determined to put the killer in jail for life.

When the victim's relatives had recovered from the shock and were able to answer questions, they provided Hooper with information that helped develop a profile of the victim.

Beverly Holzmilller's last few years of life were somewhat troubled. Her husband had died in the mid-1970s, and her recovery from the emotional trauma was slow. She sometimes lived with relatives, including three grown offspring and six grandchildren, for brief periods. Recently, she had moved from the nearby community of El Toro to an apartment in Huntington Beach. She bounced from job to job and was last known to be working for a sales firm doing telephone solicitation.

Beverly Holzmilller, according to family members, believed that liquor helped ease her pain, and sometimes she consumed more than was prudent. Social activity became important to her. If there was a party to go to, Beverly went. It was fun to dance and laugh. And she attracted men. But her family members hastened to emphasize that Beverly was not promiscuous. On the contrary, she often became loud and belligerent when overly amorous men became too aggressive. Her behavior dampened the attentions of some men, but infuriated others. One close friend commented that Beverly's lifestyle, even though she



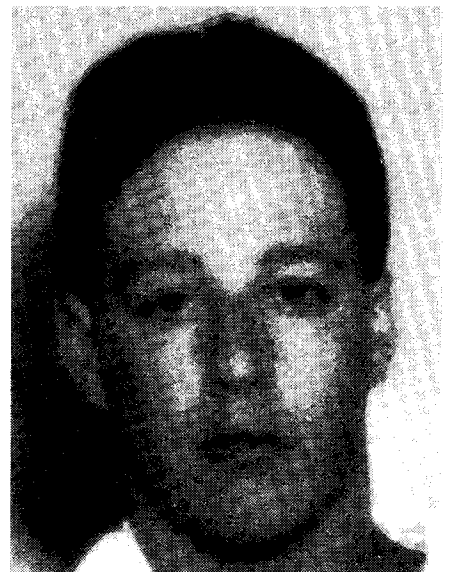
Bruises on the suspect's palms corresponded exactly with scissors' finger grips.

probably didn't realize it, made her a perfect candidate for a brutal crime.

Detective Hooper learned that on Wednesday, December 17th, Holzmilller visited a close family member in Huntington Beach. When she left, she mentioned that she was going to a nearby liquor store. No one had seen her since.

But another close relative remembered that Holzmilller had telephoned him on Wednesday night. She said she was at a fast-food restaurant on Pacific Coast Highway and called to ask if he could give her a ride home. He apologetically told her that he was unable to do so. Then a man's voice replaced Holzmilller's, saying that his name was Jerry and that he was with Beverly. Jerry reiterated the request for a ride, and the relative again explained that he was not able to accommodate them.

After answering a few more of Detec-



Carter's claim that Beverly taunted him into a rage stretched credibility and was contradicted by others' accounts.



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tive Hooper's questions, the relative suddenly said, "Hey, wait a minute! She recently had a roommate named Jerry!" Hooper felt the flush of excitement that comes with success. Quickly, he ascertained Jerry's full name and his address.

Meanwhile, Beverly Holzmilller's body had been taken to the Orange County coroner's laboratory. Dr. Joseph Halka, a forensic pathologist, performed the autopsy. Through the clinical methodology of his profession, he was able to develop important facts about the victim's death.

With meticulous precision, Halka counted the puncture wounds. There were 120 of them. Carefully, he measured the depth and configuration of each one. He established that they were consistent with the size, depth, and shape of the manicure scissors found at the crime scene.

The brutality of Beverly's attacker was further revealed when Dr. Halka discovered that the victim had several broken bones. Her sternum, two ribs, and a cervical vertebra were fractured by blows that required "a great deal of force." He formed the opinion that Beverly had been forcibly raped.

But the most disturbing finding by Dr. Halka related to the circumstances surrounding the stab wounds. He would later testify that the wounds were delivered over a period of 10 to 30 minutes and that Beverly had survived the first 80 stab wounds. Those 80 wounds had bled profusely because Beverly had still been alive while they were being inflicted. Malka stated, "My estimate would be that of the one hundred and twenty wounds, there are approximately forty that would have been delivered after or around the time of death."

Dr. Halka, like Detective Hooper, was puzzled and disturbed. Why would anyone be so violently brutal?

Hooper had obtained a photograph of Beverly Holzmilller from a family member. He arranged for it to be published in local newspapers with a request for anyone with information about her to contact Hooper.

On Saturday, December 19th, the newspapers ran the article and photograph of Beverly Holzmilller. In another section of the papers, they happily announced that the prolonged rainstorm was over and that Huntington Beach could look forward to fair, sunny days.

Lawmen found out the "Jerry" identified by Holzmilller's relative was Jerry Gelner, who indeed had been a roommate of Holzmilller's. On the same Saturday that the picture of Beverly Holz-

milller was carried in the newspaper, Jerry Gelner was brought to the Huntington Beach Police Station to be interviewed. While waiting for the report that would describe any criminal history on Gelner, Detective Hooper was at his desk finalizing the list of questions he planned to ask Gelner.

As Hooper rose to walk to the room where Gelner waited, his telephone rang. A little irritated at the interruption, Hooper answered. A male voice on the other end said, "I have some information about that lady in the newspaper. I was at a party Wednesday night, and she was there with a guy named Robert."

Hooper quickly sat back down and gave his full attention to the caller. He learned that "Robert" was Robert Carter, a local resident. He had been seen by three witnesses leaving the party Wednesday night with Beverly Holzmilller.

Now there were two potential suspects: Jerry Gelner and Robert Carter. Which one was the more likely killer? Hooper wouldn't dismiss either of them without thorough investigation. And a good place to begin would be with their respective criminal histories, if any existed.

The rap sheet on Gelner had arrived, and Hooper requested a rush on the one for Carter. When he scrutinized the two, he immediately knew which one would receive priority investigation. Jerry Gelner had no criminal history. But Robert Carter was a different story.

Twenty-year-old Robert Allen Carter had been arrested in Illinois for burglary. There was an outstanding warrant from that state for violation of probation. In addition, there was a warrant for Carter's arrest from nearby Long Beach, California, for arson. Police in Arcadia, California, were also interested in questioning Carter.

So was Detective Hooper. With the help of the witnesses at the party, Hooper learned Carter's address and telephone number. Armed with the warrants, Hooper and his team raced to Carter's apartment, which was only a few blocks from the site of the party and a short walk from the oil field where Holzmilller was found.

A strategic telephone call made by Hooper quickly established that Robert Carter was at home. But when Hooper and his partner knocked at the door of the apartment, there was no answer. They loudly announced who they were and knocked again. Risking a quick peek through a window, Hooper saw curtains moving and knew someone was

there. Without any further hesitation, the sleuths kicked the door open. Inside, the probers were greeted with silence and a closed, locked bedroom door.

Once again, they announced their presence and demanded that Carter surrender himself—and again, silence. Using shoulders and feet, they smashed open the bedroom door. Robert Carter was crouched behind a bed in a vain attempt to hide.

Hooper arrested Carter on the warrant charges, handcuffed him, and locked him in the backseat of the car. Detective R. Howell drove the suspect to the Huntington Beach Jail. He was booked at 7:25 p.m.

Many circumstances pointed to Carter as Beverly Holzmilller's killer, but the investigation team still had no hard evidence to link the young man with the crime. He had been seen leaving a party with the victim on the night she was killed, but that certainly did not prove that he was the killer.

Law enforcement people have known for many years that there is no reliable way to identify a criminal by his appearance. Robert Carter was no exception to that rule. He had just turned 20 years old two months prior to his arrest, and his face looked even younger. His skin still bore the red acne dots of adolescence. His hair was relatively short, neatly styled, and parted in the middle. It would have been difficult to distinguish him from the hordes of youths, mostly surfers, who inhabited Huntington Beach.

One feature of his, however, was inconsistent with the typical look of wholesome youth. His upper left arm was garishly tattooed with an eagle, wings spread, its talons grasping a serpent, with a lightning bolt in the background.

Detective Hooper entered the room where Carter sat. He knew he had to proceed cautiously because he had no evidence to connect Carter to the killing. Hooper began by ensuring that Carter understood his Miranda rights. Then he casually told Carter that he would like to have permission to search his bedroom at home. Carter didn't seem worried and readily signed a standard Huntington Beach Police Department consent form to search the room.

While Carter was signing the document, and during the interview, Hooper carefully watched the young man's right hand. He saw what he suspected would be there. Two small circular bruises in Carter's palm looked as if they could have been made by the finger holes of

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the manicure scissors found at the crime scene.

Hooper asked, "How did you get those bruises?"

Carter casually replied, "I was removing some floor tiles with a screwdriver. The screwdriver must have caused the bruises."

Detective Hooper left the room for a few moments to have a video camera set up to record any subsequent conversation with Carter. The detective knew that he had to have a confession from Carter or else he could forget any charges of homicide. And to get a confession, Hooper was going to have to convincingly pull a colossal bluff.

Back in the interview room, Hooper decided to start the interrogation by reviewing the charges against Carter. He said, "You know you are under arrest for a warrant. There is one in Illinois, one in Long Beach, one in Arcadia, and one in Huntington Beach."

Carter mumbled, "I'm sorry...."

Not entirely sure what that meant, the detective decided to start again. "Okay, you know you are under arrest for a warrant. There is one in Illinois...."

Carter interrupted, "...Yeah, and one in Long Beach and one in Arcadia and one in Huntington Beach." His voice was cold and arrogant.

"Okay, you know all that," countered Hooper, "I'm also conducting a homicide investigation."

With no change in expression, Carter said, "All right."

Quickly, Hooper gambled, "I want to talk to you about that. Any problem?"

Very cool and unperturbed, Carter responded, "No problem. None...none at all."

Now it was time to put all of his chips down, so Hooper began the bluff. His voice level and firm, he told Carter, "I know you killed Beverly Holzmiller!" Furthermore, he added, Carter's bloody fingerprints were on the body and on the scissors. Hooper continued to bore in by informing Carter that witnesses had seen him go into the oil field with the victim.

The convincing bluff worked to perfection. Robert Allen Carter began to waver, show doubt, and then completely caved in and agreed to confess to the killing. For the next two hours, Carter was videotaped giving his version of the bloody events on the previous Wednesday.

According to Carter, he had met Beverly Holzmiller in a liquor store early Wednesday evening and invited her to a party. They walked the few blocks to the

party, which consisted of just four or five people. After quite a few beers, he said, Holzmiller started to get loud and belligerent. So they left the party at about midnight and went to an apartment where a friend of Carter's lived. The friend agreed to let Carter stay there, but said that the woman could not stay.

Without showing any remorse, the youth continued his story. He said that after leaving the friend's house, he and Beverly walked up Alabama Street to an unoccupied house where they thought they could get in out of the rain, but locked doors and windows prevented their entry. So they continued to walk a short distance until they found a place between two buildings where, according to Carter, Holzmiller agreed to have sex with him.

From there, he said, they went into the oil field, where they again had sex. At this juncture in his story, Carter began to show anger. In the oil field, he claimed, the victim began to taunt him about his inadequate sexual performance. His voice grew more strained, and he blurted out, "Then she told me that she gave me AIDS!" That enraged him, so in a blind fury, he found the scissors in her purse and stabbed her "four or five times." Then he left her in the oil field.

That was the reason for the violent, brutal killing of Beverly Holzmiller. She had taunted him and told him that she had given him AIDS. At least, that was Carter's version of the reason. Detective Hooper suspected that the youth's explanation might contain considerable self-serving rationalization.

When Hooper mentioned that Holzmiller had telephoned someone from the fast-food restaurant on Pacific Coast Highway and had been with a man named Jerry, Carter was amused. He laughingly admitted that he was Jerry! He had used the phony name as a lark. No big deal.

Detective Hooper marveled at the suspect's coincidental selection of a false name. It had cast suspicion on a totally innocent man, Jerry Gelner.

The detective wanted to know more about the purse from which Carter had taken the scissors. No purse had been found in the oil field. He asked Carter where it was. Carter admitted that he had taken it with him when he left the victim alone in the field and had subsequently put it in a plastic bag and thrown it in a large trash container near his apartment. Confident that he had convinced Detective Hooper that Bev-

erly Holzmiller had provoked her own death, Robert Carter figured that it would be to his advantage to cooperate. He even agreed to show Hooper where he had tossed the bag containing the purse.

Not wanting to risk a change of heart by Carter, Detective Hooper immediately accepted the offer. Even though it was well past 10:00 p.m., Hooper and two of his partners took Carter to the apartment complex where the trash containers were located.

Digging through piles of garbage in the middle of the night is not the most pleasant task in the world. But it comes with the territory in police work, so, as Carter stood by, the officers plowed through the trash and found the plastic bag containing Holzmiller's handbag.

Carefully removing the contents of the large shoulder bag, the investigators inventoried the last pitiful possessions of Beverly Holzmiller. A California Department of Motor Vehicles identification card bore her picture. There were assorted photographs of her family members and a few personal documents. The underpants she had worn that fatal night were also stuffed into the bag. The only cash consisted of three pennies lying loose in the bottom of the bag. And, among assorted cosmetics, there was another pair of manicure scissors; this one with curved blades.

The peculiar thing about the contents of the victim's purse was that Carter had used the scissors to cut many of the photos and documents into small pieces.

Detective Hooper asked if there was anything else that Carter had thrown into the trash. Remarkably, the youth led them to another large container and admitted that he had thrown the boots he had worn that night into the receptacle. He said, "I took my boots and I threw them away because I was afraid they were evidence." Carter apparently didn't consider that the rain had washed away any trace of footprints.

The group's next stop was the oil field where the killing had taken place. Standing near the evergreen shrubs, Carter raised his manacled hands and pointed to the spot where he had left Beverly Holzmiller. But, of course, he had stabbed her only "four or five times," and "she was still alive" when he left her.

About 60 yards away from the shrubbery, in a large culvert, Carter pointed to where he had thrown a beer bottle when he had been there with the victim. The officers found the bottle and dusted it

(Continued on page 56)

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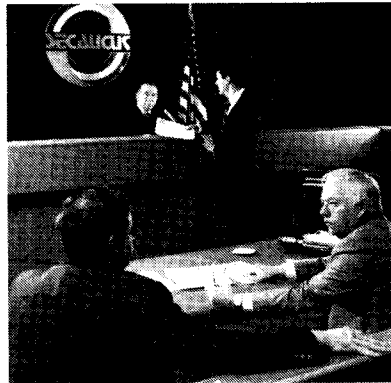
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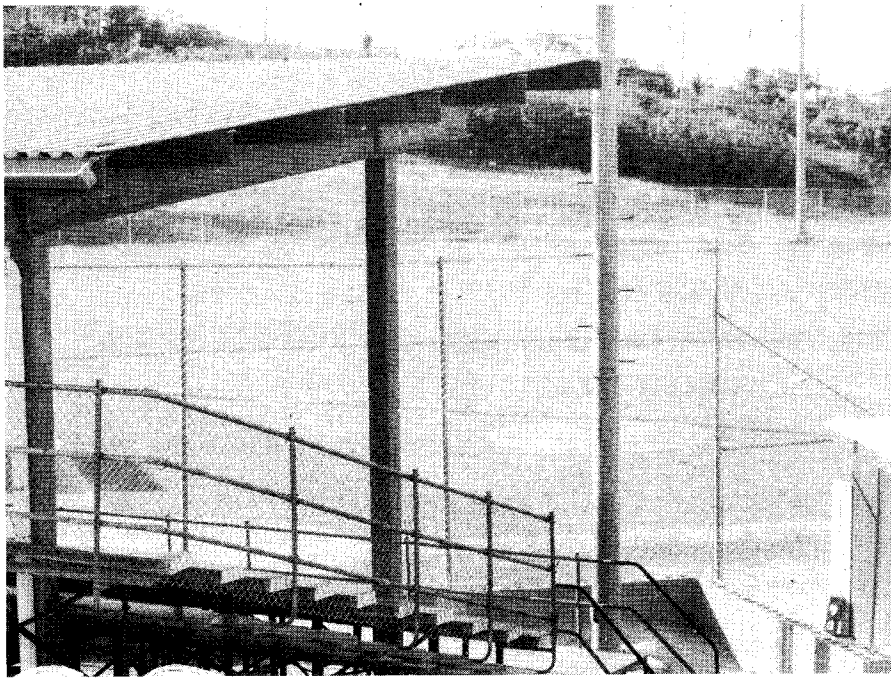
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Cathy Gunther had the misfortune to tangle with a violent crew at this ballpark.

by STEVEN BARRY

ON NOVEMBER 13, 1493, during his second voyage to the New World, Christopher Columbus anchored off the north shore of a Caribbean island the Indians called Ay-Ay. Columbus renamed the island Santa Cruz, Spanish for Holy Cross, and claimed it for King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain, who financed the expedition. But when the landing party rowed toward shore, the Carib Indians greeted the incoming Spaniards with a barrage of arrows.

The explorer sailed away from that unexpected attack, but one night in May 1989, nearly 500 years later, a 34-year-old mother had nowhere to run when violence exploded on the same tropical island.

Through the centuries, the flags flying over the largest U.S. Virgin Island have changed several times. The French, who acquired the 82-square-mile island in the mid-17th Century, established a trading company there and translated the island's name to St. Croix, French for Santa Cruz. The Knights of Malta came next, followed briefly by the French again. Then came the Danes, who ruled from 1733 until the end of World War I. Finally, the United States, fearing German designs on the Panama Canal, purchased the entire 50-some-island territory for \$25 million in 1917.

Unlike most Caribbean tourist meccas, St. Croix's economy is diversified. Under U.S. influence, Hess Oil erected the largest refinery in the free world on St. Croix's south shore. Next to it, Martin-Marietta constructed one of the largest alumina plants in the Caribbean. The result is a sprawling industrial complex nestled in lush tropic surroundings.

To construction worker Johnny Bottoms, Friday morning, May 19th, started out like any other workday. And, like every workday morning, Bottoms drove along the dirt road through the undeveloped marshland between the two industrial giants—the mammoth refinery on the left and the towering alumina plant on the right. At 6:34 a.m., Bottoms dropped off his two co-workers at the dock, then continued down the desolate road, past the old molasses tanks on the left, past Krausser's Lagoon on the right, toward the chained gate he unlocked every morning.

The sun was peeking over the tops of the refinery stacks, casting a dazzling glow over the barren tidal plain, when

On St. Croix, missing panties
were just one of many

KINKY CLUES BEHIND THE GANG- RAPED GIRL

Two used condoms and missing underwear. A victim with a smashed skull, lacerated face, and crushed chest. And two rocks used as weapons. These were the clues sleuths had to work with as they sought to unravel a homicide that was a “message murder” Caribbean-style.

Bottoms braked the truck to a stop, ready to get out and unlock the gate. But he never left the truck. He never unlocked the gate. Instead, he reversed along the winding dirt road, speeding back to the dock. When he arrived at the waterfront, he got out of his truck and shouted for his friends.

Dockworkers paused at the spectacle of the agitated man yelling about a woman's body lying on the ground in the turnaround next to the gate. The watchman heard Bottoms and sent another employee to the nearest phone. Then the watchman and the two workmen walked to the gate, while Bottoms waited for the police to arrive.

At 7:30 a.m., Sergeant Jose Quinones, who was on routine motor patrol, received the call to respond to the area of the molasses tanks between Martin-Marietta and Hess. The 20-year police veteran sped to the site and met the construction worker standing outside his truck.

“About six forty-five I went down,” Bottoms told Sergeant Quinones. “I went over to open the chain across the gate just below the molasses tank. I looked and I saw a body laying on the ground.”

Sergeant Quinones blocked the road with his squad car, then walked over to the gate. There, he found the two workmen, the watchman—and the dead woman. He asked the men if they'd touched or moved anything. They said no; they'd looked but hadn't disturbed anything.

Quinones checked the woman's vital signs, but found none. He noted the victim's appearance: body supine, wearing a long-sleeve aqua-blue sweater, a faded denim miniskirt, a white belt with buttons, aqua-blue socks, and white Reeboks. A large rock covered a portion of her chest. Her legs were ajar, she wore no underwear, and one used condom lay near her head. Her face was smashed and bloody.

Quinones secured the scene, returned to his police car, and radioed headquarters, requesting that an ambulance and

detectives be dispatched to the scene.

Shortly before eight o'clock, Investigating Officer Winsbut McFarlande's home telephone rang. McFarlande, a member of the ID section of the St. Croix PD's Investigation Bureau, was dressed for duty and ready to leave for work. The dispatcher told McFarlande that, instead of reporting to the police station, he should proceed to the old molasses tanks near the Hess plant to investigate a possible homicide. McFarlande picked up Officer John Feliciano, and the partners drove to the scene, arriving there at 8:30.

While Officer Feliciano photographed the crime scene, McFarlande collected evidence. First, he measured one foot, eight inches between the used condom and the victim's head. The lacerations all over the woman's face and head told McFarlande the killer had brutally beaten the victim with a blunt object.

Soon, McFarlande found two empty condom wrappers on the ground at a further distance from the body and, just beyond the wrappers, a large blood-

stained rock. Closer scrutiny of the rock revealed tiny flesh-like particles sticking to it.

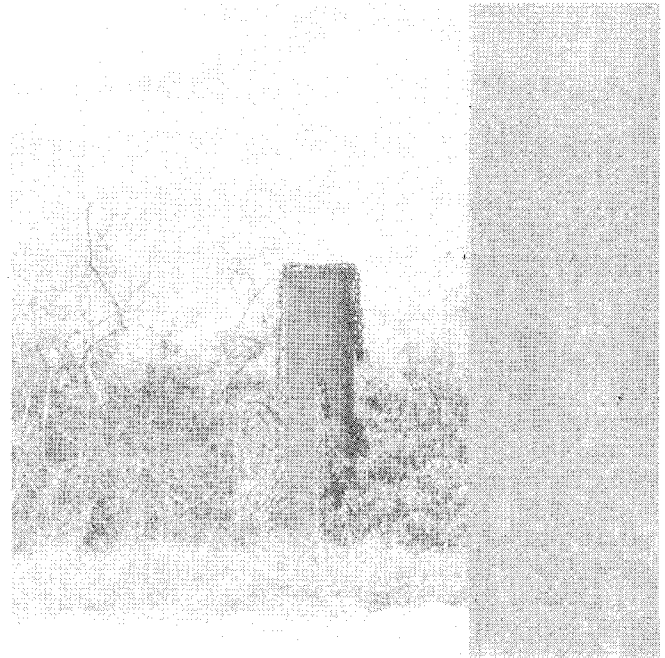
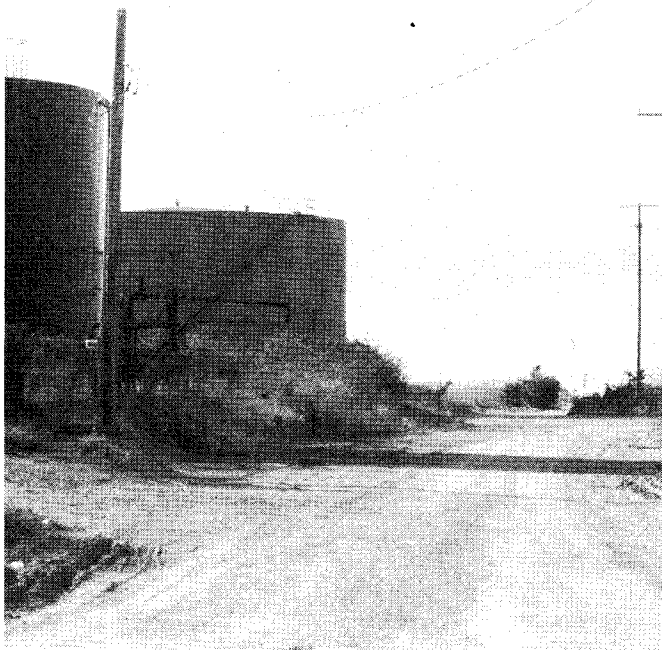
Medical Examiner James Glenn arrived at 8:56 and pronounced the victim dead at the scene. He described the crime as “quite bloody” and estimated the time of death to be four to six hours prior to his arrival—somewhere in the vicinity of 3:00 to 5:00 a.m.

While the M.E. examined the body, Officer McFarlande found hair scrapings under the victim's fingernails. When the medical examiner ordered the body transported to the morgue for autopsy, McFarlande found another used condom underneath the body. The investigating officer bagged and tagged the evidence and shipped it to the FBI lab later that day.

Shortly after 9:00 a.m., Captain Ohanio Harris, Lieutenant Franz Christian, and Detectives T.J. Macedon and Ramon Gonzalez arrived. Harris, a wily veteran of homicide detection, took charge of the investigation and summarized what they had so far: Two used condoms and missing underwear. A vic-



The large rock pictured here was found covering a portion of the victim's chest.



A construction worker started to unlock the chained gate (l.) near the molasses tanks (r.) when he discovered the body.

tim with a smashed skull, lacerated face, and crushed chest. And two rocks apparently used to end the victim's life. Obviously, the killer or killers had raped the victim before murdering her. But the sleuths believed that something rang false. Aside from the missing underwear, the victim's clothing remained intact. There were no rips or tears. Nor were there signs of a struggle, which hinted that the woman knew her assailant(s).

Detective Gonzalez, a nine-year cop with five years as a criminal investigator, would subsequently describe the next step: "After we processed the scene next to the body, we extended our circle of operation to investigate more around the area of the lagoon. And adjacent to the body in the mud, we found a piece of axle, a big rod. We took it for evidence."

While police officers searched the area for additional clues, the M.E. performed an autopsy. He found extensive injuries, including multiple skull and rib fractures, severe brain hemorrhage, nose fracture, jaw fracture, finger fracture, and multiple lacerations.

"These were all severe injuries," Medical Examiner Glenn said, "and some of them themselves could have caused death...together, they almost certainly caused death." Dr. Glenn termed the most serious injuries as those caused by blunt trauma and classified the death a homicide.

The M.E. also found extensive needle tracks on both of the victim's arms, sug-

gesting the woman was a habitual intravenous drug user. Further examination showed signs of excessive sexual activity prior to death, both vaginally and orally. Dr. Glenn prepared blood, saliva, and hair samples and sent them to the FBI forensics lab.

On Friday afternoon, Captain Harris held a press conference. Although he'd already managed to establish the victim's identity, he withheld her name pending notification of her next of kin. Instead, he described the victim as a white female in her late 20s to mid-30s, weighing approximately 145 pounds, and standing between 5 feet 6 inches and 5 feet 8 inches tall. Captain Harris added that the woman appeared to have died from "several deep lacerations to the head area with a sharp object."

Despite the discovery of the large rock found on the victim's chest and the smaller one fouled with flesh and blood, Captain Harris told the press, "We have no murder weapon, no motive, and no suspects." Instead, he asked for help, urging public assistance in solving the murder. The *St. Croix Avis* and *V.I. Daily News* responded by tagging the following paragraph onto the next day's stories:

Anyone with information about the woman's death may call the police emergency number, 915, or police headquarters at 778-2211.

Police understood the family's suffering, but they nevertheless still needed information. They telephoned the victim's relatives in New Hampshire and

asked probing questions.

Family members admitted talking with the victim within the previous 48 hours and said she sounded upset, expressing the belief that "they" were going to kill her. The victim never identified the "they" she was referring to, the relatives said, other than mentioning a drug dealer named "Peppy," who worked out of Estate Profit, a predominantly Hispanic area immediately north of the industrial complex. Estate Profit, sometimes called Machuchal, had an unsavory reputation for drugs, criminal activity, and violence.

One relative, who vacationed on St. Croix from March 23rd to May 13th, told police she'd accompanied the victim to Estate Profit several times during her recent visit—against her own objections—and observed her purchasing drugs alongside the road while they both sat in the victim's red Ford pickup truck. She said the victim had confessed over the phone that she owed an unpaid drug debt and feared for her life.

The next day, Captain Harris released the victim's name: Cathy Gunther, 34, a resident of Estate La Grange, a beachfront community on the 27-mile-long island's west coast, on the northern outskirts of the town of Frederiksted. But since Captain Harris knew nothing about the victim's background, he sent a team of detectives to comb the Frederiksted area where Cathy Gunther lived. One officer found a waterfront restaurant that Gunther was known to frequent. There, he met Gunther's closest

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After Cathy Gunther's rape and murder, her attackers drove her pickup truck to the east end of the island to conceal it.



The pickup was enshrouded by trees, making it invisible from both land and air.

friend. The sleuth learned that the New Hampshire native was married, worked as a waitress, and sent an elementary school-aged son to one of the island's expensive private schools. The officer also learned that Gunther had visited the restaurant on the night of the murder.

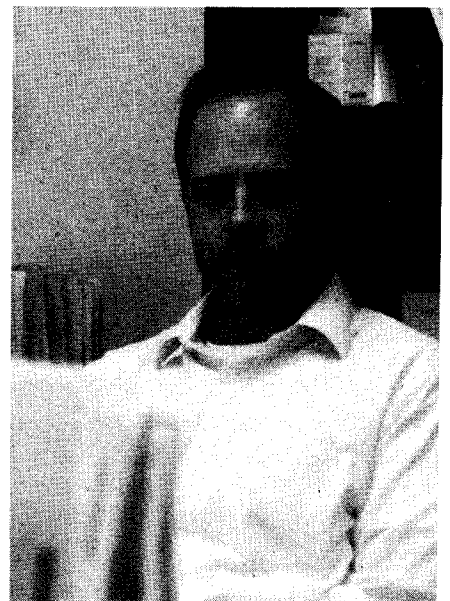
"She hadn't been here very long," the friend recalled. She estimated that Gunther left the restaurant sometime before midnight. She remembered that Cathy was upset because an Estate Profit drug dealer had taken \$20 from her earlier in the evening but never returned with the promised drugs. According to the friend, Cathy Gunther planned to drive back to Estate Profit to purchase drugs.

At this point in the investigation, the evidence and information painted a clear picture to Captain Harris: "An argument over drugs and money," he conjectured. Most likely, Cathy knew the killer, who probably dealt drugs in Estate Profit, and she owed the killer money. "Peppy" topped the list of suspects.

Problem was, Peppy vanished. The detectives knocked on doors and scratched, digging for a trace of the suspect, but two days of probing reaped no results. Worse yet, rumor had it that Peppy had fled St. Croix before Cathy Gunther's killing. The next plan called for sleuths to round up all known and suspected drug dealers operating in the Estate Profit locale.

On the following Monday, the biggest break of the case came when the police emergency line rang and an anonymous caller's voice sounded on the other end of the line. The caller told the authorities that he'd read about the rape and murder in the newspaper and was calling because he'd seen a red pickup truck driving through Estate Profit early Friday morning. A woman and a man rode in the back and appeared to be scuffling while a second, younger man drove the truck. The caller identified both men.

Detectives first located Feliciano
(Continued on page 58)



Assistant U.S. Attorney David L. Atkinson asserted that the Gunther killing was designed to intimidate other addicts.

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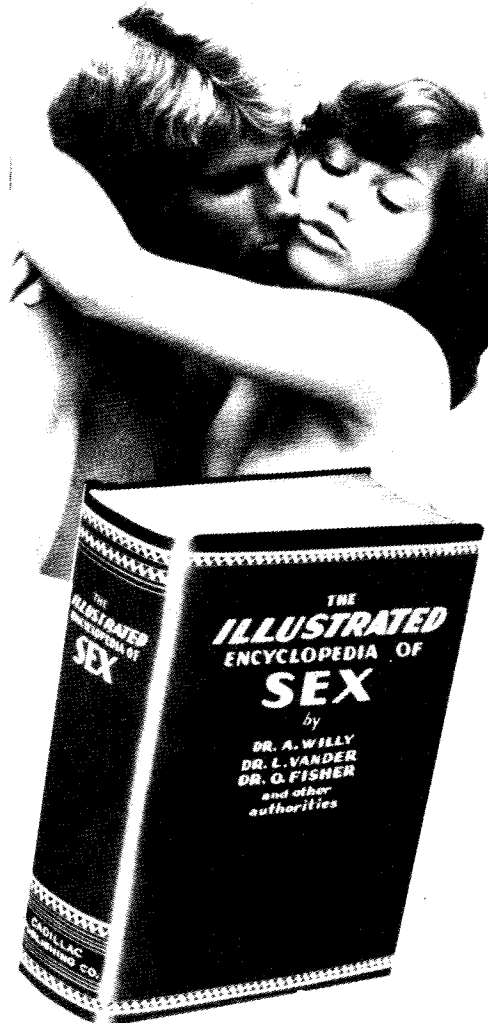
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by **BILL COX**

IT WAS SHORTLY after 7:00 p.m. on Monday, February 19, 1990, when a worried young mother called the Yukon, Oklahoma Police Department. The police dispatcher listened and jotted down the address as the concerned voice on the phone reported that her small daughter had failed to come home.

The anxious mother said that the little girl was almost two hours overdue, unusual because she was always prompt to return home from playing at a designated time. The mother feared that something terrible had happened to the elementary school girl, 7-year-old Kathy Busch.

Assuring the frightened mother that the girl might have overstayed a visit somewhere in the neighborhood, the dispatcher promised that officers were on their way to help find the missing child. He radioed a patrol unit in the area to meet the mother at an address in the southwest part of town, a large apartment complex on West Vandament.

Within a few minutes, uniformed officers were at the scene and taking a report from the worried parent. The woman related that Kathy had asked permission to play outside their apartment about 4:10 p.m.

"I told her to stay in the breezeway below our apartment and to come home at five-thirty p.m.," the mother said. It



A psychotherapist testified that Floyd Medlock was under the control of a malevolent alter ego named "Charlie."

was not unusual for the child to ride her bicycle in that area of the big apartment complex, she explained.

"She sometimes loses track of time when she's playing, but she never stays out past dark. I'm so afraid that something bad has happened to her." She fought back tears as she spoke.

As one officer made hurried notes on his clipboard, the mother described Kathy and what she was wearing when last seen. Kathy had on a white Mickey Mouse sweatshirt and blue jeans. Her girl's bike was painted aqua and pink and had a banana seat.

Kathy's mother told the officers she had searched everywhere she knew about where her little girl played or might visit, but no one in the apartment building or surrounding neighborhood remembered even seeing the youngster on her bicycle.

After taking down the missing-girl report, the officers drove slowly around the neighborhood, located a short distance from a shopping center. They checked at a store where Kathy might have stopped and other places that might attract the girl. When it became apparent that Kathy Busch was nowhere to be found in the vicinity of her home, the patrolmen radioed headquarters and asked for additional searchers.

Yukon, a small town of about 23,000 located nine miles west of Oklahoma City, is normally a peaceful and quiet community. Incidents called into the police department are usually of a routine nature and are easily handled by a force of some two dozen regular officers. But the Yukon police are well organized to get plenty of backup when the situation demands it.

This was such a situation. Within the hour, reinforcements from the local Canadian County Sheriff's Department at the nearby county seat of El Reno and from the Oklahoma County Sheriff's Department at Oklahoma City joined the hunt. Also assisting were members of the Oklahoma State Highway Patrol, reserve deputies from both counties, and civilian volunteers from Yukon.

(Continued on page 52)

Oklahoma's sex monster said evil

VOICES MADE HIM KILL LITTLE KATHY

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The search for eight-year-old Terrence Jones after he disappeared from his babysitter's front yard ended with the discovery of his body in an abandoned church.

by **BILL FRANCIS**

THE WARM SUMMER sun heated the brown and tan shingles of the two-story house in East St. Louis, Illinois. The green grass in the backyard had grown above ankle height, while the front yard was bare of grass from the continuous wear of children's

playing. The wooden porch at the front of the house provided a seat in the shade away from the noon sun for Terrence Jones and his playmates.

Terrence, a boy of eight, would spend afternoons and evenings during the week at the two-story house, which belonged to his babysitter, while his mother worked her evening job. Terrence's mother dated the babysitter's son. Although the neighborhood was in a state

of decline, the young boy played in the street and neighboring yards without any sense of fear.

On July 27, 1989, Terrence was to spend the evening at the babysitter's house as he had done several times before. The children played in the front yard until dark. Later in the evening, around 10:00 p.m., the babysitter walked past the upstairs bedroom where Terrence had been sleeping and noticed that the boy wasn't in the room. She went back downstairs to look for him. Terrence wasn't there, either. Checking outside, the woman called to the youth but there was no response. Becoming concerned about the boy's safety, the babysitter quizzed the other children about where Terrence was. They said they had not seen him since earlier in the evening when he was playing in the front yard.

The frightened woman checked with neighbors but they, too, had not seen Terrence. Maybe the boy had left with a friend and gone home, thought the babysitter. She contacted the boy's mother at work. Meanwhile, the search for the eight-year-old boy continued. He had not returned home or to the two-story house where he was last seen.

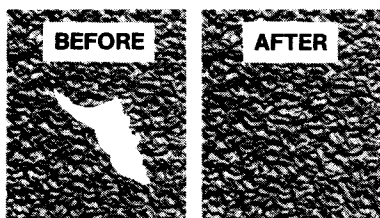
Early the next morning, a search of cars and buildings in the neighborhood was conducted by the babysitter's fami-

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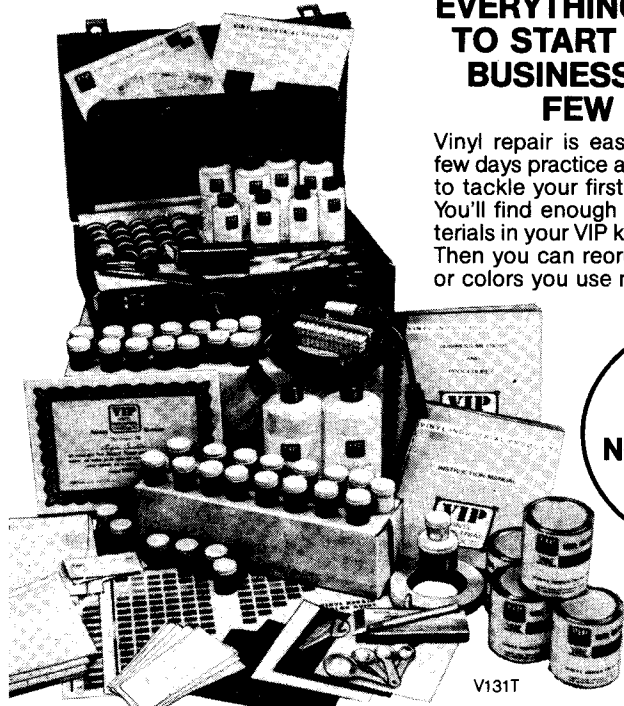
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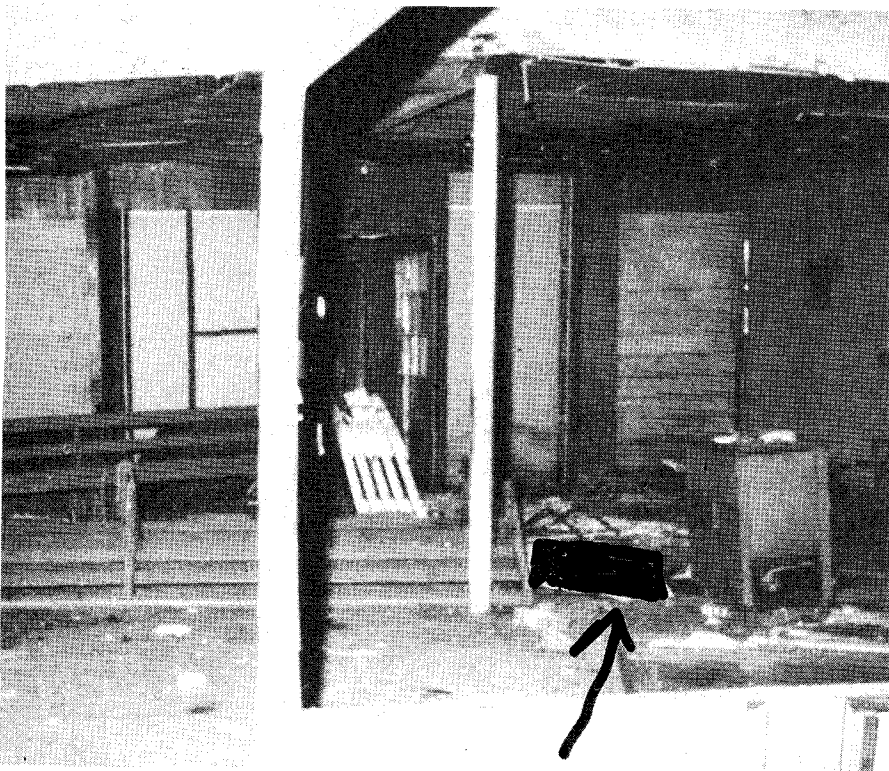
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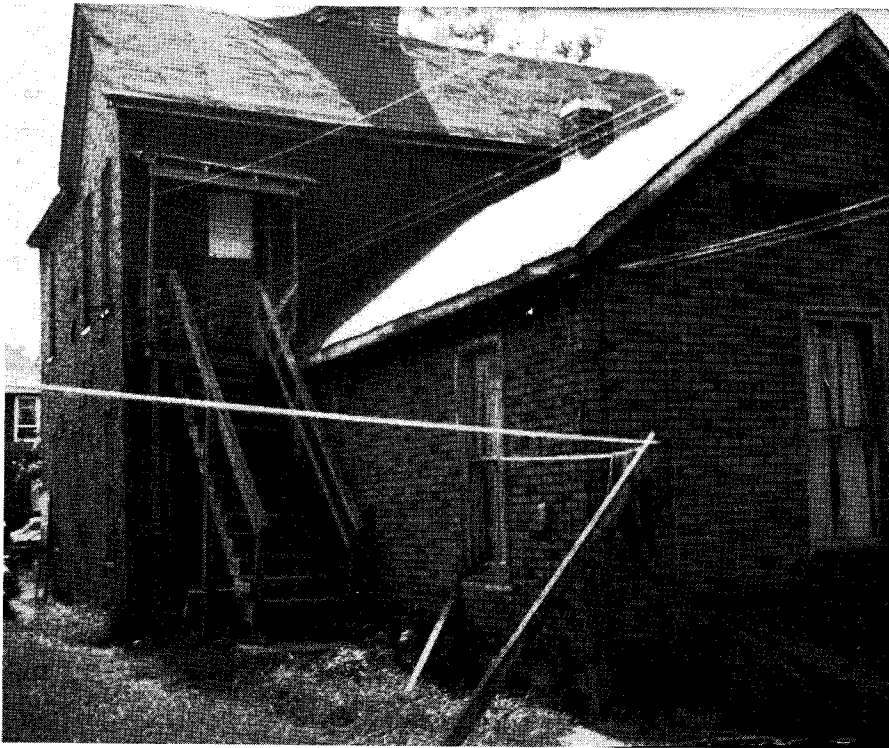
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V131T



Terrence's body lay in a pool of blood in the middle of the church floor (arrow, above). His babysitter had checked her backyard (below) for him, to no avail.



ly and Terrence Jones' relatives.

Three buildings to the east of the house where the child was last seen was an abandoned church, its white exterior almost obscured by the four-foot weeds that encircled it. Searchers walked up a narrow path through the tall weeds to the front door of the abandoned church. Inside, it took several seconds for the searchers to adjust their eyes to the church's darkened interior. When they

finally did, they were horrified by what they saw. There, in the center of the church floor, in a pool of dried blood, lay the body of little Terrence Jones.

Agent Robyn Blaha of the Division of Criminal Investigation and Inspector Alva W. Busch of the Bureau of Crime Scene Services of the Illinois Police were at the East St. Louis Police Department working on some leads to a homicide that had occurred earlier that

summer. The Bureau of Crime Scene Services provides assistance to local, county, and state law enforcement agencies. The bureau's crime scene investigators assist other police agencies in processing crime scenes with expert professional results. In the Metro-East area, a four-man office covers a 150-mile-long by 60-mile-wide area that encompasses 10 counties. Usually, only one man will handle a homicide case even if it is a double or triple killing. As this case evolved, three men from the Metro-East Office of the Bureau of Crime Scene Services became involved in the investigation of the brutal slaying of young Terrence Jones.

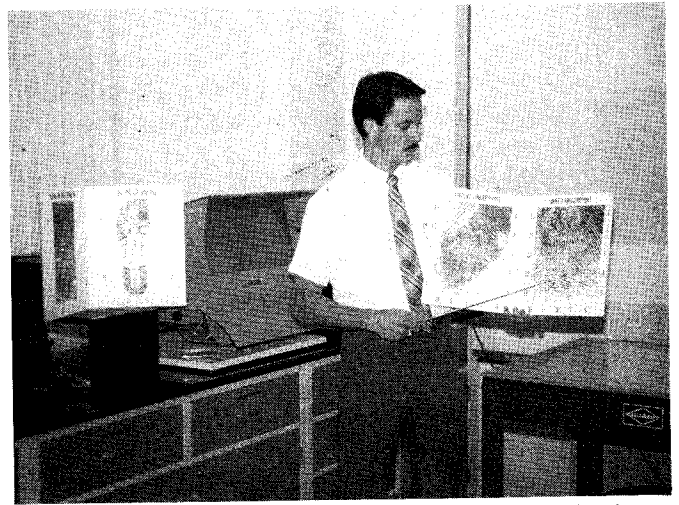
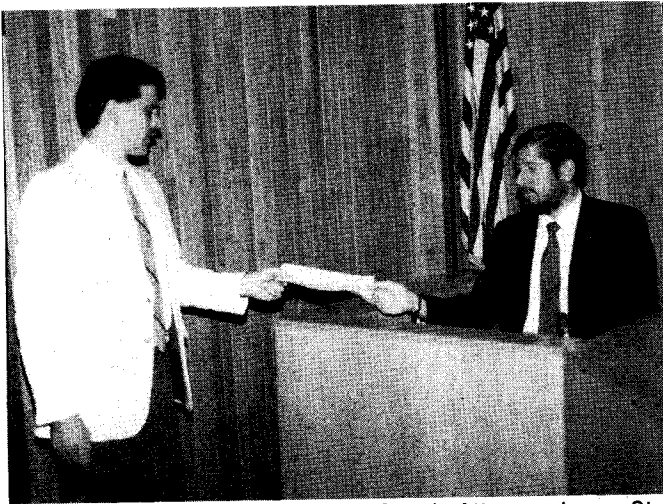


Detective Sandy Muckensturm, a 17-year veteran, was resolute in her determination to snare the depraved child killer.

The booking officer at the front desk of the East St. Louis Police Department sat behind the large desk eating his lunch. Agent Blaha and Inspector Busch had just completed obtaining elimination fingerprints from the man they had picked up earlier and were talking with the booking officer when Lieutenant Walter Brandon walked down the steps into the booking area.

Lieutenant Brandon said, "Busch, I'm glad you're here. We just got a call. That eight-year-old that was missing, they found him in an old church. They found his body inside the church."

"I'm on secondary standby status and my squad is at the crime lab," said Busch. "I rode down here with Blaha but I'll contact my partner, who is on primary duty. I'll secure the crime scene



The testimony that Assistant State's Attorney James Stern elicited from Inspector Bill Brandon in court (l.), combined with shoe pattern and fingerprint evidence presented by Forensic Scientist David Peck (r.), sealed the suspect's fate.

area until Bill comes in."

Busch's partner was Inspector Bill Brandon. Brandon had spent 15 years in law enforcement, working his way up from patrolman to detective in southern Illinois. He left the Carbondale Police Department in early 1987 and joined the Illinois State Police. He was assigned to the Bureau of Crime Scene Services and the Metro-East area. He honed his investigative skills during the next 30 months with the Bureau, where on a primary duty week he would sometimes work over six homicide cases in addition to several other felony cases.

Busch knew that his partner would be at home during lunch time. Brandon, a devoted family man, usually ate lunch during the summer at home with his family. Picking up the phone on the booking desk, Busch dialed Brandon's home number.

"Hello," came the voice over the phone.

"Did I disturb your lunch?" chuckled Busch in response.

"You disturb my life," replied Brandon sarcastically.

"Here is the scam," Busch explained. "I'm down in East St. Louis with Blaha. They've got a homicide of an eight-year-old boy over on the south side of town. I don't have my equipment or my squad with me. I'll secure the scene until you get there. They want to know your E.T.A. [estimated time of arrival]."

"I'll be there in fifteen minutes. What's the address?" inquired Brandon.

Inspector Brandon jotted down the information as it was relayed to him. His unfinished lunch sat on the kitchen table as he went out to his unmarked squad car parked in his driveway.

Blaha and Busch departed the East St. Louis Police Department en route to the crime scene. Pulling up to the side of the awaiting ambulance parked on the street, Blaha and Busch exited the car. Detective Sergeant J.W. Cowan of the East St. Louis Police Department greeted the two men.

"You working this one, Busch?" inquired the seasoned detective.

"No, Brandon is en route. He's duty man today. I just stopped to assist him because I was already in the area," replied Busch.

"It's a bad one. That little guy is over in the church," advised Sergeant Cowan.

Yellow barrier tape roped off the area around the abandoned church. Blaha and Busch spoke with people on the street who approached them while they

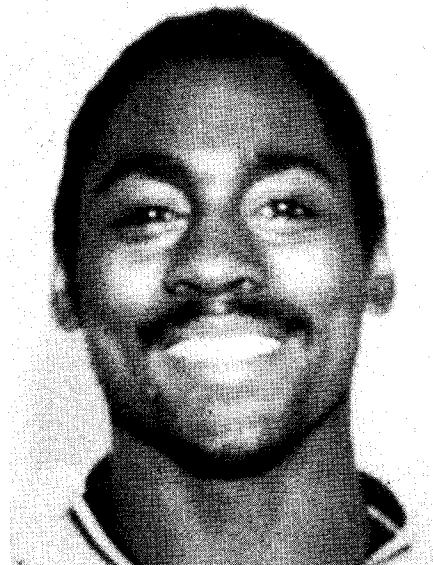
waited for Inspector Brandon to arrive. This area of town was like many neighborhoods in East St. Louis. Years of unemployment, gangs, and drugs had taken their toll on the buildings and homes. The church there had long since been abandoned. Its shell remained to remind residents that the neighborhood was once a peaceful place to raise children.

At 12:59 p.m., Inspector Brandon arrived at the scene. He was briefed by Detective Cowan. Brandon, Blaha, and Busch walked to the front door of the church. Stepping inside the entryway, they stopped to allow their eyes time to adjust to the dim interior of the building. Columns of light streamed into the church from holes in the roof and sides of walls. Several dust-covered wooden pews leaned together on the east side of the church. Two white granite tombstones covered with dust and cobwebs rested against the wooden pews. The floor of the church was vacant of furniture except for a metal furnace lying on its side in the center of the room.

The church floor was dirty, with sections of wooden paneling scattered about. The body of Terrence Jones lay face down on two pieces of wood paneling on the floor. His right hand was clutched up under his stomach. He was clothed in a white T-shirt, now stained a brownish tint from the dried blood on it. A pair of white brief-style underwear also stained by blood was positioned on the boy's left leg. His blue jeans lay on the dirty floor near his head.

Brandon studied the crime scene. He made notes of his observations. In the dried blood around the boy's body, a shoe pattern was visible on the wooden

(Continued on page 48)



When Carl Lawson impudently flung his shoes at investigators, he didn't realize he was also tossing his freedom away.

HE WASN'T A bona fide serial killer by FBI standards, which hold in part that, for a killer to be classified a serial murderer, he must claim three or more victims in at least three separate "incidents."

But for all intents and purposes, he was a serial killer, all right. He claimed two victims in one incident, another in a second, and would have committed his fourth murder in a third if he hadn't been stopped in the process of carrying out the crime.

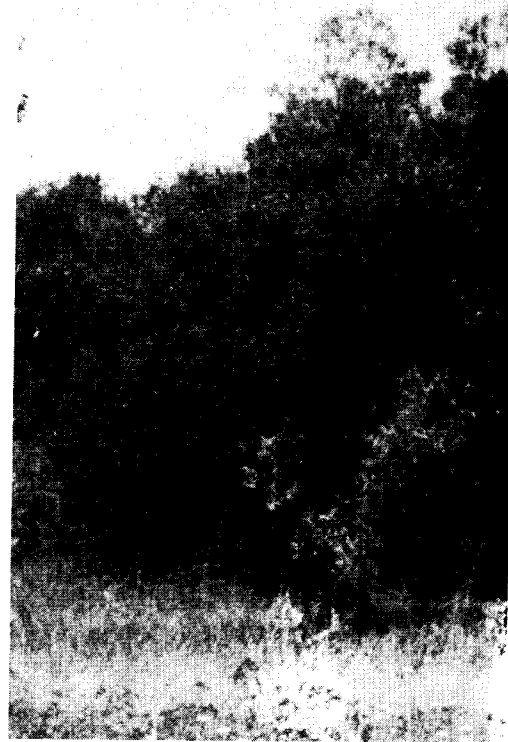
Although he didn't strike until late summer 1989—at least not as far as authorities in Oregon and Washington State knew—it would later become clear that he was in an extended fantasy state during this period and had been trolling for victims for at least several months prior to that time, working up his nerve to begin the atrocities he eventually committed.

Powerless in his closest relationships, he had begun searching for someone—not just anyone, but someone special—to play his ultimate power trip on. He was lurking in the shadows and waiting until just the right moment to strike.

In many ways, he was like the monsters who came before him—killers like Ted Bundy, Jerome Brudos, Dayton LeRoy Rogers, the Green River killer, and a seemingly endless slew of others. He, like they, sought out strangers as his victims. But instead of women, the victims of choice for most such murderers, this cowardly killer sought out helpless children, young boys whose trust he managed to gain with promises of friendship, money, candy, and toys. When it was all over, few could dispute that his malignant deeds, perhaps because children were involved, proved more savage and emotionally painful in the eyes of lawmen and the disbelieving public than those of his more notorious predecessors.

If it can be said that anything good came out of this case, it is only that this sexual psychopath, this monster hiding inside a human shell, was stopped before he could put his nightmarish fantasy into full play and snuff out more young lives. Before his activities were thwarted, however, he would commit murder with calculated cold-bloodedness, terrorize entire communities, and virtually turn the populace of two states inside-out.

There are few crimes that have instilled such a high degree of public fear as those committed by this killer, mainly because he struck at pure innocents and left everyone wondering who and where he would strike next. No one's children were safe as long as the murderer continued to roam the region's streets and stake out its parks and playgrounds.



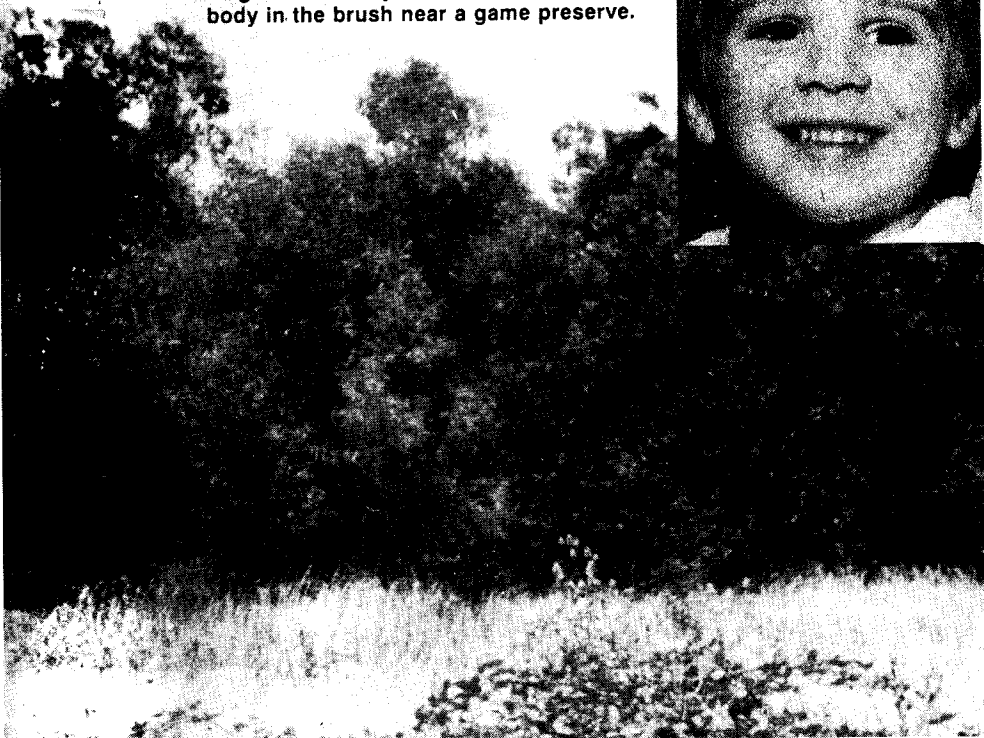
by PHILIP MADIGAN

THE REIGN OF terror that sickened the Pacific Northwest began on Monday, September 4, 1989, Labor Day, in Vancouver, Washington. A few minutes



Young brothers Cole (inset, l.) and William Neer fell prey to a sexual psychopath who ambushed them when they rode their bikes through David Douglas Park.

The disappearance of Lee Iseli (inset) from a school playground ended with the tragic discovery of his nude, lifeless body in the brush near a game preserve.



upper torso. Miller's first impression was that the boy had been struck by a car. The child, who appeared to be no more than 9 or 10 years old, was unconscious but still breathing, which gave Miller hope that he could be saved. Without moving the boy, Miller ran as fast as he could to a store about three blocks north of the park and called 911.

When officers from the Vancouver Police Department arrived, they could immediately tell that the child was a victim, but certainly not an accident victim. It was obvious to them that he had been stabbed repeatedly in the upper chest!

Because the boy was still alive, attending paramedics felt a glimmer of hope that he could be saved. Without wasting a precious minute, they summoned the Life Flight helicopter from Emanuel Hospital, located just across the Columbia River in Portland, Oregon. The paramedics did what they could for the child at the scene. They then transported him to Fort Vancouver High School, the nearest site where the aircraft could safely land. He was picked up at the school's large parking area a few minutes later by the helicopter.

The boy was barely breathing as a nurse and paramedic feverishly treated his wounds during the short flight to Portland. However, despite their heroic efforts, there was just no way to save him. His injuries were too extensive and he had lost far too much blood. The child, who had no identification on him, was pronounced dead on arrival at the

before 7:00 p.m., Dave Miller was walking along Northwest Andresen Road, a busy thoroughfare that runs north and south adjacent to the west side of David Douglas Park, when he spotted a mortally wounded child.

The boy appeared to be of Asian or Indian descent. He lay motionless in a ditch that runs along a dirt-bicycle trail

in a heavily wooded area of the park. The area, accessible only by foot or bike, is not clearly visible from the park's more public areas. But Miller had been able to see the boy from the side of the road, and he rushed over to see if he could help.

Miller noticed right away that there was a lot of blood on the youngster's

DOUBLE-LENGTH FEATURE:

WASHINGTON STATE'S MOST SADISTIC CHILD STALKER:

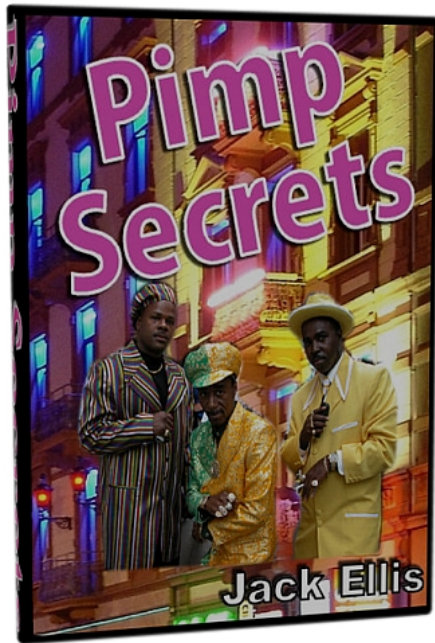
PEDOPHILE TROLLED FOR YOUNG BOYS...

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“How do you describe the enormity of the crimes for which the defendant has pled guilty? What is the appropriate word? Outrageous? Appalling? Beyond belief? Horrific?...His one hobby and passion was killing. Plan child murders. Commit child murders. Relive fantasies about child murders and write about them in chilling detail in a murder diary.” This was the argument used by a prosecutor to fight leniency for the serial killer who was the terror of the Pacific Northwest...

hospital at 7:37 p.m.

Duane Bigoni, a deputy Oregon state medical examiner, was assigned to the case because the child had died in Oregon, even though the attack was believed to have occurred in Washington

State. Bigoni concurred with the investigators' opinion that the child had died from fatal stab wounds to the chest and abdomen, but added that a definitive autopsy would still have to be done to determine the exact cause of death and

whether or not there were secondary wounds or signs of sexual attack.

“We have very little information on this one,” said Bigoni, shaking his head in disbelief. “We don't have an ID on the kid. We're hoping someone will miss him and that way we can get a name.”

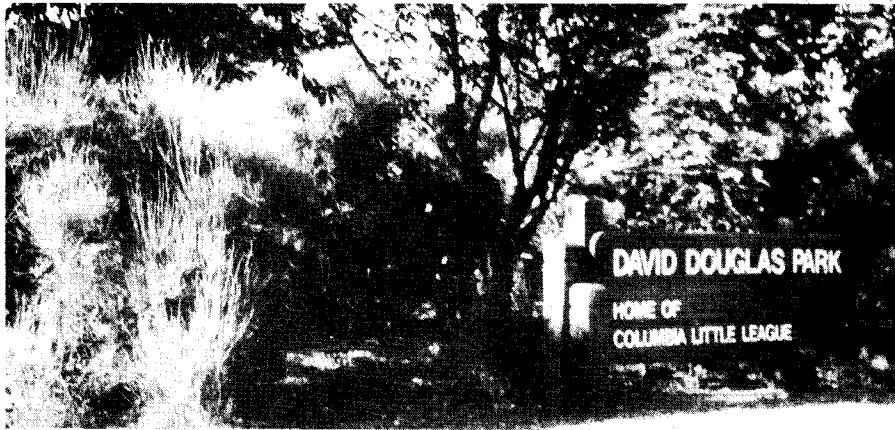
Meanwhile, a few minutes shy of 8:00 p.m., a worried father began searching the neighborhood adjacent to David Douglas Park for his two young sons who had not yet returned home for dinner from a bicycle ride.

Earlier that day, at about 4:00 p.m., 10-year-old William Neer and his 11-year-old brother, Cole, had informed their father that they were going on one of their rides to a nearby driving range. They planned to scavenge for lost golf balls, for which they were regularly paid one cent each by the golf course's manager. The two boys usually spent their money on baseball cards, model cars and planes, and candy. They had promised their father that they would be home by 6:30 p.m., but they had not yet returned.

Around 9:00 p.m., following a frantic street-by-street search that yielded no trace of the boys or their bikes, and after being unable to find anyone who had seen them, the boys' alarmed father called the Vancouver Police Department to report his two children missing.

When word of the missing boys filtered down to the lawmen investigating the David Douglas Park homicide, about a dozen police officers, firefighters, and members of the Silver Star Search and Rescue Team remained at the scene where the boy's body had been found. They planned to spend the night there.

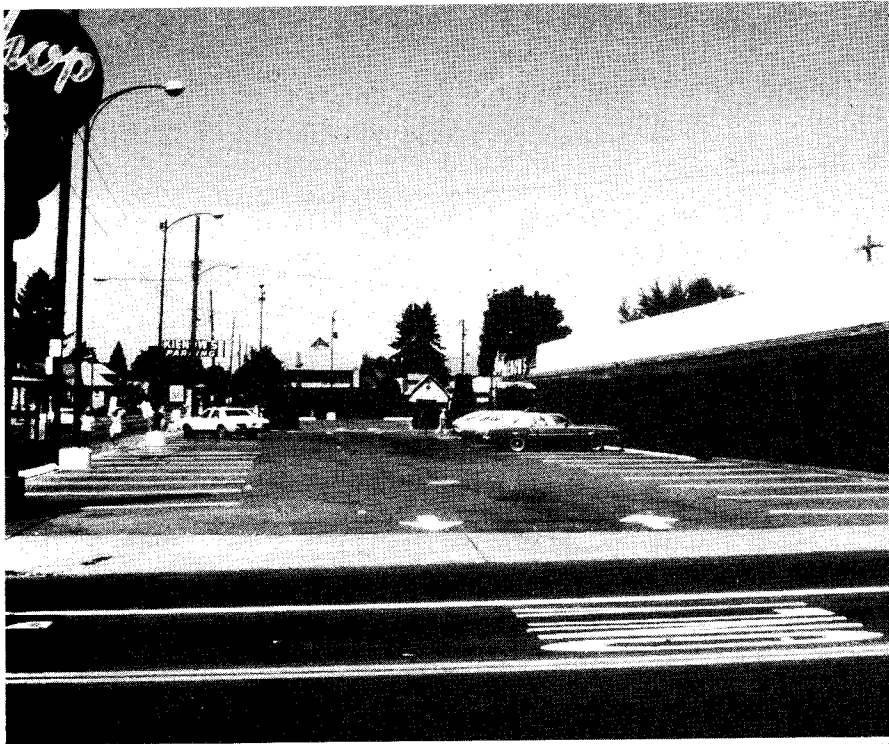
Fearing that curious onlookers might



Dozens of searchers scoured David Douglas Park in hopes of finding the Neer boys.



Cole's body was discovered seven hours after William's in the park's heavy brush.



Employees at a Portland grocery store claimed to have seen the missing Lee Iseli.

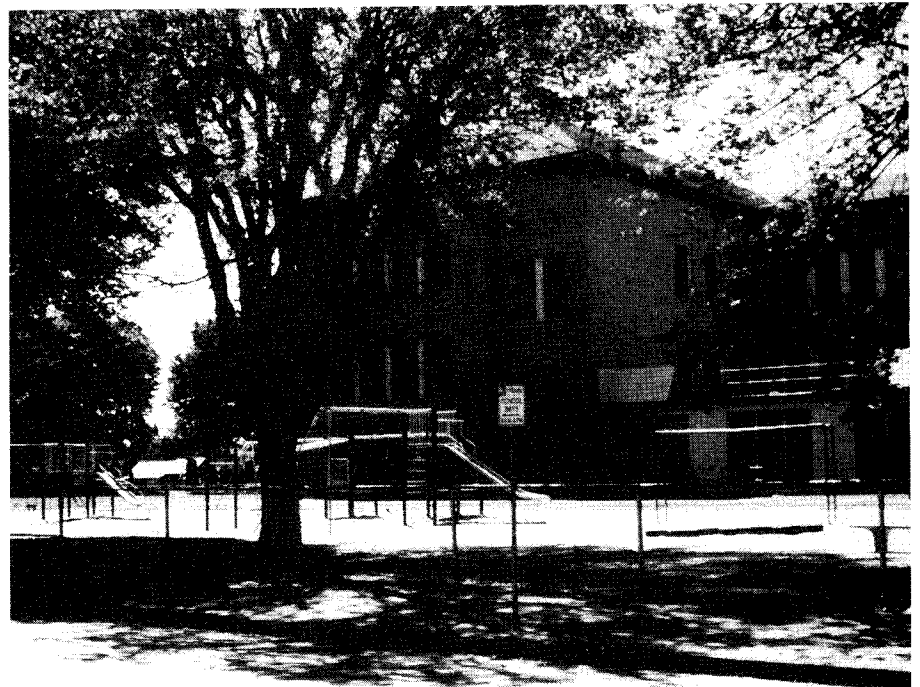
interfere with their search efforts, police cordoned off the area. They also closed down the northbound lanes of Andresen Road later that evening, according to Vancouver Police Lieutenant Roy Brown.

As the park search continued, the sleuths tried to determine if the victim was one of the Neer brothers. The lawmen moved carefully in their questioning of the distraught father. They didn't want to unduly alarm or distress him further by making irresponsible statements about the boy found in the park. After all, the victim might not be the man's son. Sleuths made every effort to obtain as much information about the man's sons as they could, such as physical descriptions, the clothing they were wearing when they left home, and the types of bikes they were riding.

Meanwhile, at the park, one group of searchers armed with flashlights and lanterns proceeded carefully along the trails while another group beat the bushes in search of evidence and, possibly, another victim. It was slow going under the conditions of night but, a short time later, searchers found not one, but *two* childrens' BMX bicycles near the trail, about 45 yards south from where the stabbing victim was found. Lieutenant Brown told reporters that investigators did not yet know for certain if one of the bikes belonged to the dead boy, but he added that both bikes fit the description given to police by the Neer

boys' father. Fearing that the unnerving discovery meant there might be another victim somewhere, the lawmen decided to call in extra help and expand the search.

"We have no idea at this time who the [dead] boy is, who the bicycles belong to, or if there are any other victims," said Lieutenant Brown, not wanting to jump to any premature con-



A relative saw Lee talking to a stranger at this playground before he vanished.

clusions. He added that he hoped a positive identification would be made soon. "We are going under the assumption that there may be more victims," he said, his statement obviously based on the report filed by the worried father.

Some seven hours later, at about 2:00 a.m., a volunteer from the Silver Star Search and Rescue Team found what all those concerned hoped they wouldn't—another victim. Like the first, it was a little boy. This one was dead at the scene. Appearing to be no more than 10 or 11 years old, his body was lying in heavy brush about 25 yards east of where the bicycles were found earlier in the evening.

Like the first body, the second victim had been stabbed numerous times in the chest and abdomen. Both boys had defensive wounds on their hands and legs, indications that they had attempted to fight off their attacker before succumbing to his violence.

A short time later, there was no longer any doubt who the boys were. Both were identified as William and Cole Neer. William had been found first, police said, and both boys had likely been attacked about the same time, between 6:15 and 6:45 p.m. There was no apparent motive for the murders, which had occurred less than a mile from their home.

"What kind of motive does someone have for killing a ten- and eleven-year-old boy?" asked Vancouver Police Captain Ray Anderson. "There are only so



La Frambois Road in Vancouver, Washington, leads to the Department of Wildlife hunting area where Lee's body was found.

many possible motives in something like this. With adults, there's always the anger motive. People get mad at each other and fight. But when it's a couple of young boys cut up for no apparent reason...you just don't know.

"This kind of thing just never happens in Vancouver," continued Captain Anderson. "We can go a whole year without a homicide. These are just two brothers—spitting images of each other—out riding their BMX bikes, and they come across an assailant. We're talking about the kinds of things that happen to other people in other places, but hopefully not to you."

Captain Anderson said both boys were fully clothed when found but cau-

tioned that that did not necessarily mean they had not been sexually assaulted. He said detectives were awaiting tests to determine whether or not the victims, in fact, had been.

"If we find out they were [sexually assaulted], it's something else again," he added.

Investigators sent the victims' clothes and other evidence from the crime scene to the Washington State Crime Laboratory in Kelso, Washington, for analysis, hoping for any kind of break that would lead them at least one step closer to the killer. However, little of significance was learned, dashing sleuths' hopes that the case could be quickly solved.

The case took on a marked intensity

like none that Vancouver had seen before. Homicide cases involving children are always more intense, said Captain Bob Kanekoa of the Vancouver PD. "It strikes you harder than anything when juveniles are involved," he said.

The intensity was evident throughout the next day as the sleuths combed the park with metal detectors in their search for evidence. At one point a knife was found, but it was not considered to be the murder weapon. It was covered with mud and rust, apparently from having been at the location for a considerable time prior to the murders.

Police officials warned area residents to take extra precautions in the David Douglas Park neighborhood, and advised people, especially children, not to go to the park alone. They urged residents to report any suspicious characters or activities in any of the Vancouver neighborhoods, especially those near parks.

Uneasiness and anxiety were virtually pandemic among area residents. Mothers and fathers were seen in areas near David Douglas Park after school the day after the murders. Sentry-like, they positioned themselves about 50 yards apart, lining the paths that schoolchildren normally took to their homes.

"I'm a little jumpy, a little worried," said one area resident after learning about the grim murders. The mother of a third-grader who lived only a few blocks from the park said she began driving her child to school instead of allowing him to ride his bike. "I know the park has had its problems...[but] I didn't think anything bad would happen."



An attempted abduction at this theater (r.) led to apprehension of child killer.

Police confirmed that the park had previously been a trouble spot for the department, with late-night teenage drinking parties and occasional fights. But nothing ever came close to matching the senseless violence that claimed the Neer brothers' lives.

Parents weren't the only ones who were jumpy in the aftermath of the Neer murders. The Vancouver School District took the precaution of increasing adult supervision on playgrounds and at student crossing zones. The school also sent letters home, cautioning students not to wander into secluded or wooded areas and to walk or bicycle in groups.

In their efforts to better understand every aspect of the tragedy, detectives began looking at the Neer family's background. Investigators learned that the family had moved to the Vancouver area in 1986 from North Dakota, settling in the suburb of Hazel Dell. Because of employment difficulties, however, the family was forced to move in July 1989 into public housing in the McLoughlin Heights area of Vancouver.

Neighbors told detectives that the Neer family was quiet. They kept to themselves, but were generally well liked. It was common for neighbors to see William and Cole tearing down the streets of the usually quiet neighborhood on their BMX bikes.

"Those boys were always so good," recalled one friend and neighbor. "And they were always together, every time they went out bike riding."

"They were just babies," said a tearful relative of the victims. "I can't imagine anyone doing this to them."

In the meantime, while making arrangements to take the victims' bodies back to their native North Dakota for burial, the boys' father told the Associated Press that he was also making plans to take his only surviving child to Hillsboro, Oregon, where they would live with a relative.

"As soon as I step outside that door," said the father, "I'm gone. I'm not going to lose my last son to this crap." He said he didn't plan to ever set foot in Vancouver, Washington, again, not even to drive through it.

"Vancouver—I used to like it," he said. "The boys seemed to like it really well. Now, I don't want anything to do with any of it."

The grieving father told reporters that the public needed to know what had happened to his family. Children, he said, "need to know that they should listen to their parents. Something's going to happen if they don't. Don't let them

wander off too far. Losing one is bad. Losing two...all I've got is my baby left."

In the days following the double murder, detectives concentrated on interviewing family members in an effort to reconstruct William's and Cole's activities the day they were killed. They also went door to door through the neighborhood looking for potential witnesses.

In the meantime, detectives located a young boy who had been in the park late on the afternoon of the murders. He was interviewed and, according to Acting Vancouver Police Chief Bob King, Portland police artist Jean Boylan was brought in to draw a composite sketch of a suspicious man seen in the park the day the Neer boys were killed.

"The sketch has been circulated among our police officers, and they have instructions that if this person is seen, we want to talk to him," said King, who stopped short of calling the man a suspect. "We're considering him a person of interest, someone we want to talk to about the case." King added that if his officers had no luck in finding the man, the sketch would be released to the news media.

"This is one of those cases that is so senseless," he said. "We're going to need a lot of help in solving this one. Hopefully, other people will come forward with information about others who may have been in the park at the same time. That's how these cases are made."

A short time later, police officials announced that a second person, believed to have been in the park at the time of the killings, was being studied. A witness provided detectives with a description from which a second composite sketch was prepared.

"We have reason to believe that this fellow is someone who hangs around the park quite a bit," said Captain Anderson. "Our officers are showing the sketch to people who may have been in the park Monday to see if they can help us find the man. He is only someone we want to talk to and we don't want to raise any terror in anyone."

Captain Anderson added that detectives weren't sure whether more than one killer was involved, or whether the killer was a man or a woman. He said searchers would continue until investigators were "satisfied that nothing slipped past" them.

As one day followed another, despite two police sergeants each leading a team of three detectives in their search for clues, only a few leads of any significance trickled in to the Vancouver Po-

lice Department. With little else they could do unless something substantial turned up, detectives, aided by numerous volunteers, returned to David Douglas Park and the site of the Neer murders.

"We want to backtrack where we've searched already because we may pick up on some things that may have been missed earlier," said Captain Anderson. "We especially want to look at some areas where people were seen running through the park at about the time of the crime....[It's] an area that's heavily wooded and has a lot of nooks and crannies. There are a lot of leads that we have to follow up on that are routine."

One of those leads was supplied by a woman who saw a man running from David Douglas Park at the approximate time the killings were believed to have occurred. Police now had at least two persons of interest to be on the lookout for; both were men.

Investigators followed up on leads obtained from interviews with neighbors and from more than 100 telephone calls generated by the release of the composite drawings. Callers told police they had seen men resembling one or the other of the sketches driving near the park around the time of the murders and described the vehicles the men were driving. Some callers suggested neighborhoods where the men might reside. Others provided detectives with the names of companies where the men might work.

However, the investigators ran up against a brick wall at nearly every turn. The leads didn't pan out. The persons of interest had airtight alibis and witnesses who could vouch for their activities at the time of the murders. Unfortunately, by mid-September, the homicide probers were still at square one.

Investigators were relentless, however, in their perseverance in the case. They backtracked again and again. They found a reliable witness who told them he had seen the Neer boys riding their bicycles north on Andresen Road near the park at approximately 6:10 p.m. They found another witness who said he had seen the boys heading south, walking their bikes uphill along Andresen Road in the same time frame.

Despite their dogged efforts, all the investigators had been able to do was retrace the victims' activities up to about 6:10 p.m. on the day they were murdered. They were without clues as to the boys' movements from that time until the time William's body was discovered by the passerby.

At the request of the Vancouver Police Department, the FBI in Washington, D.C., worked up a psychological profile of the possible killer. The profile suggested that the killer most likely lived in the community and probably was very familiar with David Douglas Park and the surrounding area. The profile also suggested that the killer could have known the two boys and most likely was physically large enough to easily overpower them. The nature of the deaths indicated the killer was comfortable with knives and may have used a knife in a previous assault or killing.

The senselessness of the crime, the profile said, suggested the killer could have been "acting out in response to a significant traumatic experience that happened to him in a close time frame" with the murders.

Vancouver investigators appreciated the FBI's psychological profile, but many expressed frustration that it really didn't bring them any closer to collaring a suspect. All it did was give them an insight into the mind of the type of killer they were dealing with.

Toward the end of September, when the case seemed destined for failure, investigators ferreted out yet another witness who provided them with a new lead. A passing motorist informed detectives that he saw two young boys whom he believed to be the Neer brothers in the vicinity of the park at about 6:30 p.m. on Labor Day. He recalled the boys were near a park trailhead and were talking to a man.

"Both of them had their bikes, and they were standing in the middle of the road, on the median strip, talking to this individual," Captain Anderson told the press. The witness told investigators that the man in question was in his late teens to early 20s and had dark hair. He was on foot. Unfortunately, the witness could not provide other details, such as a description of the clothing the man was wearing.

"It leads us to the possibility that, whoever this person was, he could well be the assailant," said Captain Anderson.

To everyone's dismay, citizens and police alike, no new leads surfaced, and the unknown man seen talking to the boys remained a mystery, at least for the time being.

THEN, in late October, tragedy struck again. Across the river from Vancouver in Portland, Oregon, 4-year-old Lee Joseph Iseli was reported missing by a relative.

According to the report taken by the Portland Police Bureau, Lee had gone with a 9-year-old relative to a playground at Richmond School on Sunday afternoon, October 29th. The playground, at Southeast 41st Street and Grant Avenue, was near the boy's home, located in the 3200 block of Southeast Clinton Street. According to family members, the boys played there regularly.

The older boy told detectives that at about 1:00 p.m. that afternoon, Lee was playing on a concrete-and-rock climbing knoll known as "the volcano" when he disappeared. The older boy, who was playing on other playground equipment, looked up and saw Lee talking to a man. He ran over and told Lee not to talk to strangers, and advised him to call out for him if the man did anything unusual. When he looked toward "the volcano" a few minutes later, Lee was gone. Unable to find Lee, the boy rushed home and told a family member about the disappearance.

A family member told police, "[Lee's] the kind of kid who doesn't take off, but he can get sidetracked easily."

Lee's older relative told police that the man he saw talking to Lee was in his early 30s, 5 feet, 10 inches to 6 feet tall, and thin in build. He was wearing a T-shirt and blue jeans.

Because of Lee's age, police promptly began searching throughout the boy's Southeast Portland neighbor-

hood. Dog handlers brought in bloodhounds in the hope they could pick up the boy's scent.

There was no question that the dogs picked up Lee's scent on the school playground, but they lost it at the curb. According to the dog handlers, this strongly suggested that the boy may have been picked up by someone in a car.

Police and volunteers fanned out in the neighborhood, knocking on doors and visiting the local businesses. At one point, clerks at a nearby grocery store on Southeast 39th Avenue told police that Lee Iseli had been seen inside the store after 1:00 p.m., wandering the aisles alone. That he was seen alone in the store prompted police to consider that Lee had wandered away from the school playground after he was seen talking to the stranger. Store employees insisted they were certain of the time they saw the boy because it had been right after the beginning of the 1:00 p.m. lunch break.

"I figure if he would have left with that guy [at the school]," said a relative, "why would they go to the store? Lee wasn't seen with anybody at the store. If the guy stayed outside and gave him some money to go in and buy something, Lee wasn't the kind of kid who would have just wandered around. He would have spent it. He's never wandered off before. It's really hard to say what happened, whether he's just wandering around someplace or what.

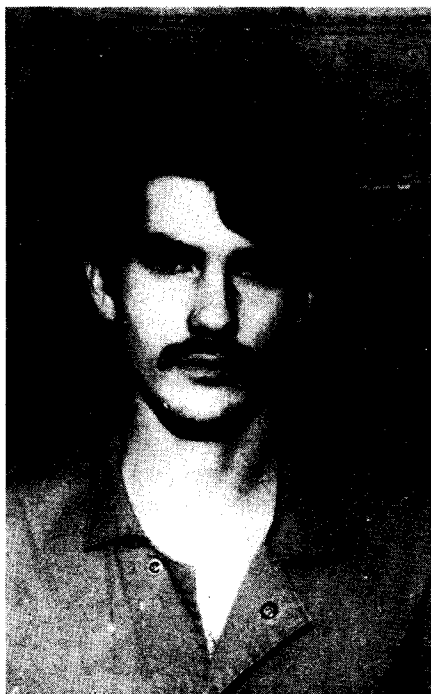
"It might be that he saw some kids and went off and played with them. He could have wandered into somebody's garage or basement," added the relative, a hopeful tone in his voice. "It may be that he's just around, that he thinks he's in trouble and is afraid to come out."

As the day wore on and no further trace of Lee Iseli was found, relatives and police began to fear the worst.

"Four-year-olds don't run away," commented Detective David W. Simpson, a spokesman for the Portland Police Bureau. "We're getting very concerned, especially as time goes on."

As darkness approached, a bureau-wide alert was dispatched describing Lee Iseli as 4 years old, 3 feet 8 inches tall, and weighing 30 to 35 pounds. The alert also described the boy's hair as blond, with bangs down to his brown eyes. He was wearing a gray warm-up jacket with red stripes on its sleeves, a white T-shirt with writing on the front, and medium-blue pants. He may also have been carrying a sweater with him.

(Continued on page 62)



Westley Allan Dodd kept a diary in which he described, among other perversions, a desire to do "experimental surgery."

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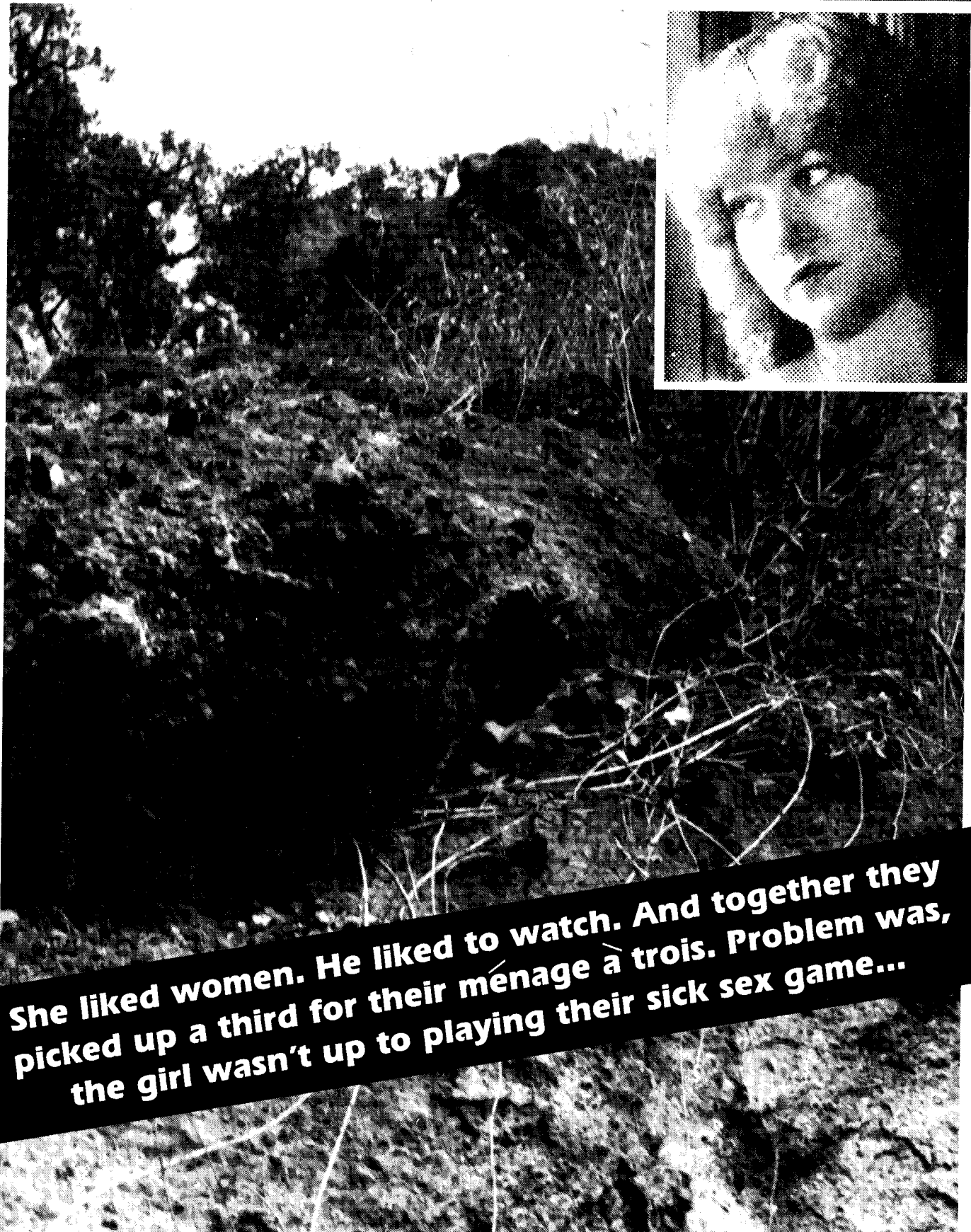
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She liked women. He liked to watch. And together they picked up a third for their ménage à trois. Problem was, the girl wasn't up to playing their sick sex game...

This rocky ledge is just the tip of a cliff that plummets some 70 feet into the Clackamas River in rural Oregon. It was from this spot that a pair of killers hurled over the nude body of Deborah Spicer (inset), which led to their own downfall.

Oregon shocker:

KINKY SWINGERS FLUNG THEIR SEX SLAVE OFF A CLIFF!



Clackamas County investigators inspected the shallow water and riverbank for clues to the victim's identity, but they came up dry.

IT WAS CHILLY on Saturday morning, October 7, 1989, when Mike Courtney placed his fishing gear into the bed of his pickup. It was shortly before daybreak as he backed out of his driveway, a cup of steaming coffee in one hand, and headed out of the Portland metropolitan area. Courtney's destination was a spot along the banks of the Clackamas River, in rural Clackamas County, Oregon. There, he would join a number of other men he did not know who, like him, were on a quest for much sought-after steelhead and a day of undisturbed tranquility far

by GARY C. KING

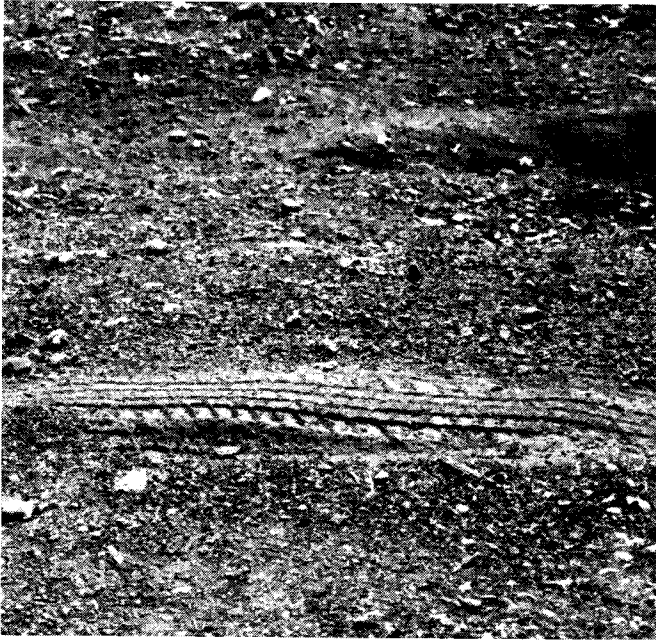
away from the hustle and bustle of the city.

When he arrived at his preselected location on the river's south shore, about 300 yards upstream from the Carver Boat Ramp, Courtney was glad to see the first rays of sunlight rising in the eastern sky. Although it looked like it was going to be a nice day, he had prepared himself by bringing his rain gear, just in case. Weatherwise and otherwise,

just about anything can, and does, happen in Oregon, as Courtney would soon find out.

The banks of the river were lined with fog that morning despite the clear sky overhead. Although the scene was peaceful, even with all of the other fishermen around, the fog leant an eerie mood to the quiet morning. Nonetheless, Courtney put his line in the water and hoped he would quickly hook a big one.

While waiting for a fish to hit, Courtney watched the cliffs opposite him to the north where Oregon Highway 224



Tire tracks (l.) found at the spot from which victim was thrown were positively matched with treads from the tires (c.) of

parallels the river. As the nearby communities began to come to life, he could hear and occasionally see the cars and trucks as they motored down the highway.

At a few minutes before 8:00 a.m., Courtney saw a silver-blue van on the road slow down and stop along a gravel turnout atop the cliff. He watched for several minutes as the driver peeled the van's tires in the loose gravel, backing it up and then driving it forward.

The driver repeated the process a few times, apparently trying to get the van into just the right position for some mysterious purpose. Finally, after the driver had parked the van, all was quiet again along the riverbank.

About 20 minutes later, Courtney looked up again at the north cliffs. He couldn't believe his eyes. He saw a man with what looked like a naked woman hoisted over his shoulder, walking to the edge of the high cliff. In one swift motion, the man took the woman from his shoulder and tossed her over the side toward the river, some 70 feet below!

As Mike Courtney watched in astonishment and horror, the body, on its way down, tumbled onto an outcropping of the cliff. The man who had tossed the body over apparently saw this, too, and he was soon crawling down the steep embankment to the ledge. When the man reached the body, he pushed it over the side and watched it fall until it made a splash in the river below.

"Hey!" Courtney shouted to the other fishermen. "Somebody just tossed a body off the cliff!"

Few of the other fishermen paid much attention to Courtney—until they saw with their own eyes the naked corpse drifting in the shallow water. As the stunned spectators watched, the body drifted a few yards until it became lodged against some rocks. Except for a rolling motion in time with the rushing water, the figure didn't move, and those watching presumed she was dead. Courtney, still in a state of shock, looked up the cliff in time to see the van peeling out and speeding off down the highway.

Courtney and several other fishermen rushed to their vehicles and went to find telephones. Within minutes, calls about the dead naked woman in the river came pouring into the Clackamas County Sheriff's Department dispatch center. The fishermen who chose not to go home returned to the river to watch the action when the lawmen arrived.

Among the first officers on the scene were Clackamas County Detectives John Turner, Dale Frazell, and Lynda Estes. Jeffrey A. McLennan, Clackamas County deputy medical examiner, was also present, as were several divers. A number of sheriff's deputies surveyed and secured the crime scene, while others rounded up all of the witnesses. After briefly viewing the body, the investigators began by taking statements from the witnesses.

"I heard a van on the road going back and forth, you know, peeling," Mike Courtney told Detective Turner. "Then about twenty minutes later, there was this guy walking down to the edge of

the cliff with a lady over his shoulder." Courtney described how the man threw the body over the side, and how he himself yelled to the other fishermen about what he had seen. "Everybody looked at me like I was on drugs."

"I kind of heard a splash," said another witness. "Then somebody says, 'There's a body,' and a minute later, there was this body floating along."

The witnesses described the man who tossed the corpse over the cliff as bearded and burly, with dark brown curly hair. He was wearing a plaid shirt and dark pants. He appeared to be 30 to 40 years old, about 175 to 200 pounds, and approximately 5-foot-7, give or take an inch. Some said they saw a second person with him. The witnesses weren't certain, however, if the second person was a man or a woman.

Witnesses told the investigators that the van was either silver-gray or silver-blue and that it did not have any side windows. Unfortunately, it was too far away for anyone to see the license plate number, but the witnesses said they thought it was a mid to late '70s model, perhaps a Ford.

McLennan, the deputy medical examiner, donned chest waders to make a preliminary examination of the body while it was still in the river. He could easily see that the corpse had sustained wounds during the fall, but there were several other wounds that appeared related to her death. When he was finished, divers removed the body from the river.

So who was this mystery woman? the



a van (r.) that was traced to a married couple who left Oregon for Wisconsin immediately after Deborah was murdered.

detectives wondered. And why had someone chosen to kill her? Without identification documents or articles of clothing, they knew that learning her identity might prove difficult. The only item on her body was a turquoise earring, and it didn't seem likely that the earring alone could help them identify her. Because time was of the essence, they didn't want to wait for someone to come forward with a missing-person report. That could take days, even weeks. They knew they had to move quickly, before the trail became cold. But how? And with such scant clues, what direction should their probe take?

In their effort to generate leads, the three detectives sent out alerts to all of the metropolitan law enforcement agencies with a description of the victim and the crime. They also alerted the local media, providing virtually the same information they had given to their colleagues, holding back only those details that would be known only to them and the killers, such as the exact nature of the victim's wounds. The last thing lawmen wanted to do was attract compulsive confessors and not be able to determine whose admission was genuine and whose was false. But they knew that their best chance to solve the case would be after someone came forward with an identification. They would then, at least, have a cornerstone on which to build their probe.

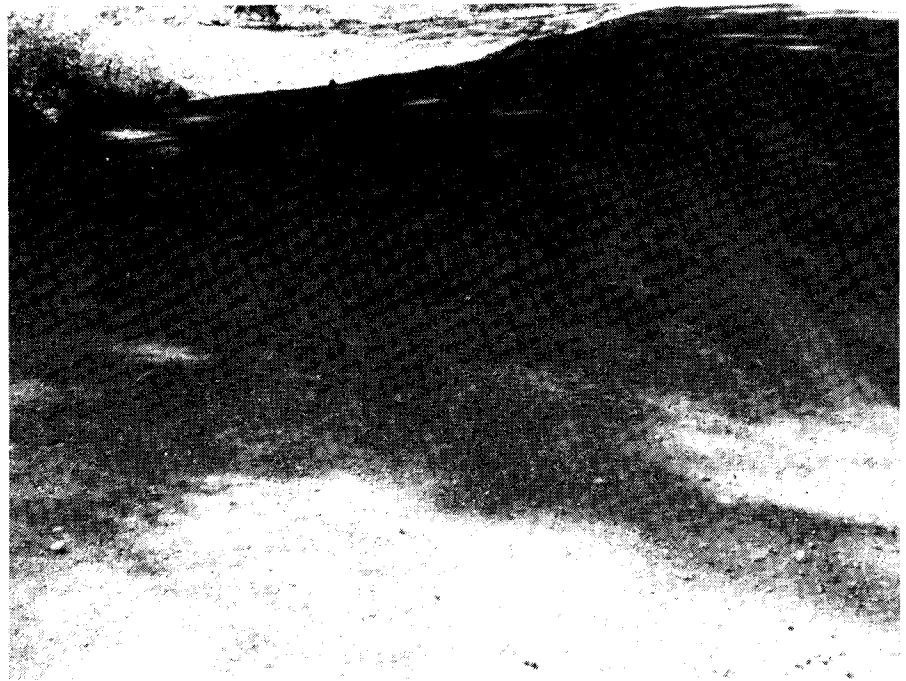
As it turned out, sleuths didn't have to wait very long. The next day a Gresham, Oregon, woman contacted authorities in Multnomah County about a

missing relative. She said that the relative, 27-year-old Deborah Sue Spicer, had not returned home from a night of drinking on October 6th, and she feared that something bad had happened to her. She provided the lawmen with a description of Deborah, and it fit the general physical description of the nude victim in the regional alert. The lawmen who made the missing-person contact reported their findings to the Clackamas County detectives investigating the crime.

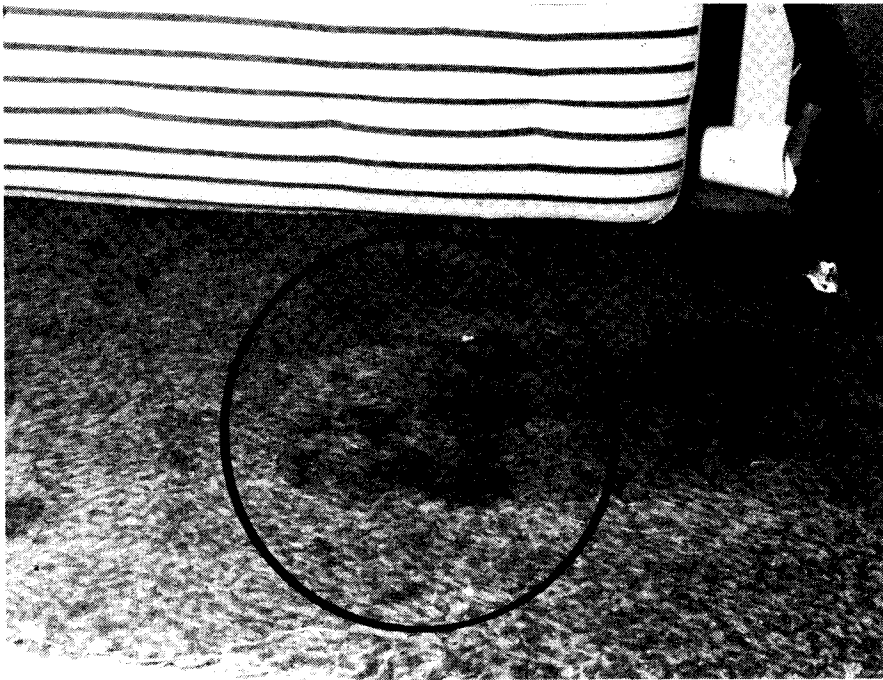
When the Clackamas County detectives interviewed the person who had

filed the missing-person report on Deborah Spicer, they knew within minutes that they had identified their nude victim. The relative showed the sleuths a photograph of Deborah Spicer. Although the victim's face was swollen and injured when they pulled her out of the river, there was no doubt that she and the missing Deborah Spicer were one and the same. The sleuths broke the unpleasant news to Spicer's relative and, as difficult as it was, proceeded with their questioning.

Spicer, they soon learned, was born on July 31, 1962, in Columbus, Ohio,



Roadway leads to the lookout from which Deborah Spicer's nude body was thrown.



Carpet stained with blood (circled) was found in the back of the couple's van.

and moved with her family at age 5 to California. After a year in the Golden State, the family moved to Oregon and settled in East Multnomah County. Deborah had been a cheerleader at Reynolds High School in Portland and graduated in 1980.

The distraught relative described Deborah as a social person who had many friends. Deborah enjoyed tennis, skiing, and bowling, and she had been working as a secretary until shortly before death.

"She had migraine headaches, and she missed so much work that she just had to quit that job," said the tearful relative.

Deborah had been drinking a little lately, police learned, and had been at a local tavern the night before her body was seen being thrown into the river. The relative said Deborah liked to have fun, like other young people her age.

"She would play pool with the girls and the boys. She liked to have parties. But she also liked her home." Her favorite pastime was reading romantic novels.

Deborah had dinner on Friday night with her relatives and a boyfriend, police learned. "He [the boyfriend] was here when they went out Friday night. [Deborah] stir-fried a dinner for all of us."

The relative told the investigators that she and another relative had last seen Deborah about 3:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 7th. She showed up at her relative's apartment, where Deborah also

lived, with a man and a woman whom the relative had never seen before.

The relative described the man as 6 feet tall, 25 to 40 years old, with dark, sunken eyes. His black hair reached his collar in the back, but was shorter on the sides. He had a beard and tattoos on both forearms. One of the tattoos was of a star or perhaps a snowflake. The man was wearing a flannel shirt, open in the front, a tank top, and jeans. He had another tattoo on his chest that read, "Debby Lynn."

The woman was described as about

5-foot-2 to 5-foot-5 with light-brown hair. She appeared to be in her 30s and was of medium build. She was wearing a short-waisted black jacket and jeans.

A boyfriend, with whom Deborah had been fighting, told the detectives that he had received a telephone call from Deborah about 4:00 a.m. on Saturday from an undisclosed location. Although the details were sketchy, Deborah apparently had told her friend that she was at the home of a Gresham couple and that they wanted her to engage in sex acts. She hadn't wanted to participate, and apparently had asked for help in getting out of the situation.

"[Deborah] was no saint, but she was not a bad girl," said the relative. "That person had to be crazy to do what he did. What kind of person would do that—kill somebody just because she didn't want to do what they wanted her to do, and just toss her without clothes off a cliff? I don't care what that man was. I want him caught. No. I want him dead. I believe in capital punishment. He took her life. And no matter what she was, she didn't deserve to die...like that or any other way."

Later that same day Dr. Karen Gunson, a deputy Multnomah County medical examiner, performed a definitive autopsy on Deborah Spicer's body. Dr. Gunson determined that Deborah had sustained chest and abdominal knife wounds, a total of four, and received wounds during the trip over the side of the cliff.

It also appeared that Deborah had been beaten about the head and face, but



Sleuths rolled over the carpet and found that the blood had soaked clear through.

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it was difficult to determine with any degree of accuracy if the wounds were the result of a beating or had been caused by the fall. There were also signs of asphyxiation, but the medical examiner was unable to determine if Deborah had been strangled manually or by other means, such as having something placed over her face. Dr. Gunson's conclusion was that the primary cause of Deborah's death was from strangulation, despite the four stab wounds.

In their efforts to generate additional leads, the detectives enlisted the aid of a police artist to work up composite drawings of two possible male suspects from their witnesses' descriptions. The composites were then distributed throughout the Northwest and appeared in several media outlets. The composites prompted more than 150 calls to the sheriff's office.

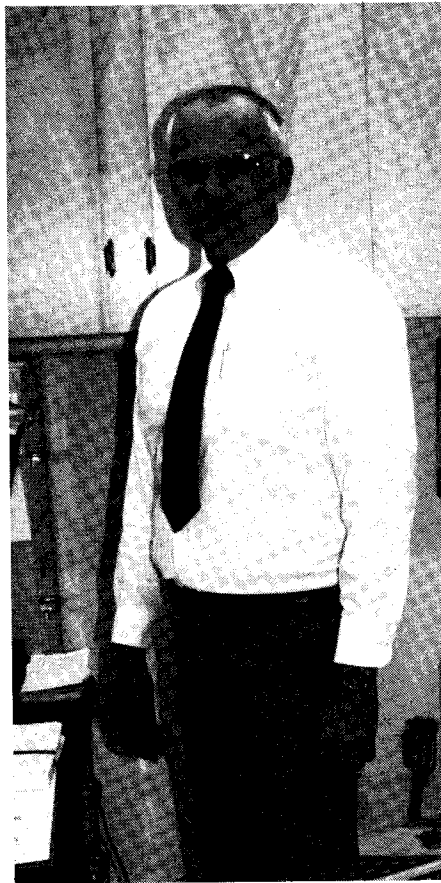
"People want to help so much," said Deputy Judy Gage, Sheriff Bill Brooks' public information officer. "We have to eliminate all the tips that come in. We hope it won't be too long. Somebody must know these people."

One such tip came in from Klamath Falls, a town in southern Oregon. The caller reported seeing a van with a man and two women who were similar in appearance to the descriptions provided by witnesses. However, the lead didn't pan out.

It wasn't long, however, before sheriff's detectives received a tip that led them to a southeast Portland tavern. It was here that Deborah Spicer was seen drinking with two other people, a man and a woman, the night before her nude body was thrown over the cliff and into the Clackamas River. Detective John Turner and his partner, Detective Lynda Estes, wasted no time getting to the drinking establishment.

After questioning employees and "regulars" at the tavern, Detectives Turner and Estes eventually determined that Deborah Spicer had met Randy Charles Bockorny, 35, and his wife, Debra Lynn Bockorny, 34, on Friday evening, October 6th.

Witnesses who placed the trio together described Randy Bockorny as 6 feet tall with a medium build, blue eyes, black collar-length hair, and a Vandyke beard. They also said he had a teardrop tattoo near his left eye and a partially drawn spiderweb tattoo on his left wrist. Both forearms, witnesses recalled, were covered with tattoos, as was much of his body. Someone said he even had a tattoo of the name of a former girlfriend on the tip of his penis.



Clackamas County Sheriff's Department Detective John Turner headed the investigation into Deborah Spicer's murder.



Detective Dale Frazell was on hand to interview those who had witnessed killers' bizarre body disposal method.

Debra Bockorny, witnesses remembered, was 5 feet 6 inches tall and weighed about 140 pounds. She was further described as having wavy light-brown, collar-length hair and blue eyes. Witnesses said she had tattoos on both of her upper shoulders. One was of a Harley-Davidson motorcycle emblem and the other had a teardrop in its center and said "Teardrop Randy."

Witnesses told Detectives Turner and Estes that the couple drove a silver-blue 1976 Ford van with a gray stripe. It had no windows on the driver's side. Further inquiries revealed that it had Wisconsin license plates numbered ENS 849.

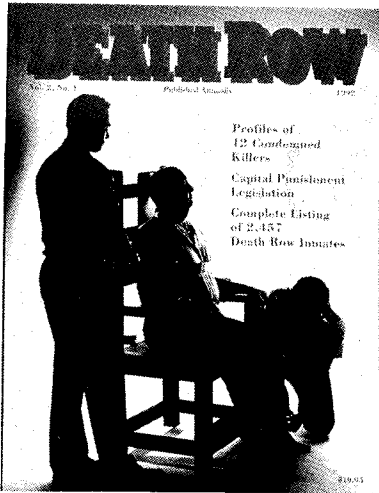
The descriptions of the Bockornys and their van matched almost perfectly the descriptions obtained earlier from the fishermen who saw Spicer's body fall into the river. At this point, there was little doubt in Turner's and Estes' minds that Randy Bockorny was the man seen tossing the body off a cliff. The homicide probers had no difficulty obtaining arrest warrants for the Bockornys on suspicion of murder.

Detectives Turner and Estes soon learned that Randy and Debra Bockorny lived in a small, isolated rental house on a large lot in the town of Gresham at the time of Spicer's murder. Since this was in Multnomah County and out of their jurisdiction, the sleuths sought and readily received the cooperation and assistance of the Multnomah County Sheriff's Department and the Gresham Police Department. The multi-jurisdictional law enforcement agencies promptly converged on the residence with search warrants.

As probers had expected, nobody was at home when they arrived. Turner and Estes believed their murder suspects had fled the state soon after dumping Spicer's body into the river. Nonetheless, after being let inside by the owner of the house, they went through it room by room in their search for evidence.

Deputy John Gilliland, evidence technician for the Clackamas County Sheriff's Department, accompanied by his colleagues, collected evidence of various types. These included the obvious, such as items that might have been used as weapons, as well as the not-so-obvious trace evidence. Since they believed that Spicer had been killed or mortally wounded at a location separate from where her body was dumped, they were looking specifically for evidence showing that Spicer was inside the Bockornys' home. Fingerprints, articles of clothing, or other personal items would be particularly useful.

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The towering Justice Center Jail in Portland held the suspects until their trials.

In one of the bedrooms, investigators found traces of blood. They also noted that a large section of a green carpet had been literally cut away from the rest of the carpet. Turner and Estes wondered why the carpet had been cut out, and whether or not the carpet's removal had anything to do with Spicer's death. They suspected that it had. Deputy Gilliland examined the areas adjacent to the cut section, looking for traces of blood.

It wasn't until the sleuths were on their hands and knees, searching the floor and, specifically, beneath the bed, that they found perhaps the most damning piece of evidence, the coup de grace, in Turner's opinion. It was an earring, identical to the single earring found on Deborah Spicer's body when it was recovered from the river!

Because Spicer's body had been found in Clackamas County, and because Detectives Turner and Estes had done most of the legwork leading to the identification of the Bockornys as suspects, it was decided that Turner and Estes would continue the investigation instead of turning the case over to their Multnomah County colleagues, despite the fact that the lawmen now believed Spicer had been killed in Multnomah County.

During their background check on the Bockornys, with assistance from the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and the FBI, Turner and Estes learned that Randy Bockorny had an extensive police record. According to NCIC records, Bockorny had 47 contacts with law enforcement dating back

to 1973. The NCIC indicated that most of his record was on file with the Langlade County Sheriff's Department in northern Wisconsin.

Bockorny, sleuths learned, had been convicted of various crimes, ranging from robbery in 1973 to attempted escape and assault of a Wisconsin state

prisoner in 1977. He was also convicted for parole violations in 1983 and for disorderly conduct in 1985. On October 3rd, just four days before Deborah Spicer's death, Langlade County issued a felony warrant for his arrest for failure to appear in court on a battering charge filed by a former girlfriend the previous March.

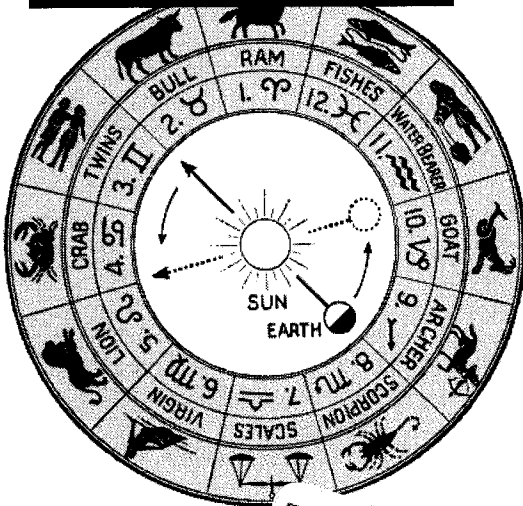
Through the assistance of Sergeant Brad Henricks of the Langlade County Sheriff's Department, Turner and Estes soon learned that Randy Bockorny was born in Antigo, Wisconsin, and had spent most of his childhood there. He had several relatives who still lived there. A search of Wisconsin's Department of Motor Vehicles files showed that Bockorny had purchased a 1976 Ford van from an Antigo resident in 1988.

"He has served numerous stints in the Wisconsin prison system," said Sergeant Henricks, who added that Bockorny's various sentences totaled at least 10 years. By contrast, however, Deborah Bockorny had no record with the Langlade County authorities. Henricks told the Oregon detectives that he believed the couple had met somewhere on the West Coast, but he couldn't say precisely where.

(Continued on page 71)



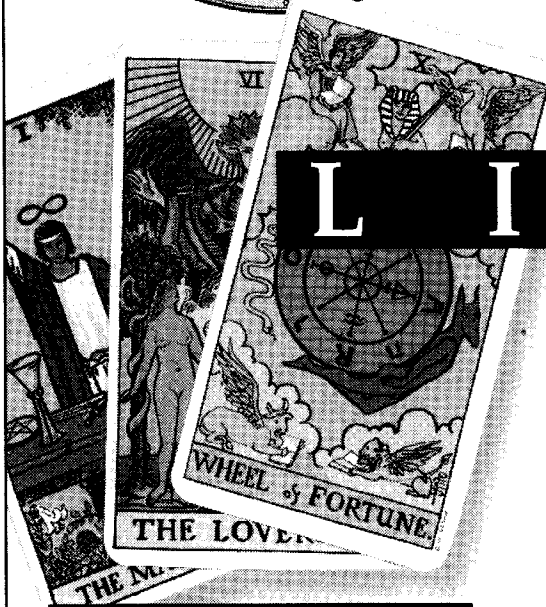
When both Randy and Debra Lynn Bockorny were accused of murder, their nuptial bliss rapidly dissolved into ire, with each pointing a finger at the other.



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Forsaken Church

from page 29

paneling. The investigators began to talk about their observations.

"It appears that he was sexually assaulted," advised Blaha.

"There's a straight-shooter [metal tube for smoking cocaine] over here. It looks like this place was used by a doper. That makes the case even harder," stated Busch.

"What do you think about this shoe pattern in blood? It's a ProWing tennis shoe pattern," stated Brandon.

"Wow! It radiates out from the blood beside the body, like an ink stamp, getting lighter each time," responded Busch.

"That means that the blood had to be liquid for that to occur. So that ProWing pattern was made by someone before the body was found," suggested Brandon.

"We need to locate anyone with ProWing tennis shoes and collect them. Weren't there some people that came inside here when they found the body?" inquired Blaha.

"Are you going to try fingerprint on skin with this one?" asked Busch.

"Yeah, will you get in touch with Dee [Inspector Dee Heil, a laser expert] and have him bring the laser?" Blaha asked Busch. "We'll take the body to the morgue and try the laser. Will you go with the body while I work the scene?"

"You got it, buddy. I'll go with the body after you get finished with photographs," stated Busch.

Brandon began the task of recording the scene and location of the body with photographs and measurements. Thirty minutes later, Terrence Jones' body was loaded into the ambulance and en route to the morgue. Agent Blaha remained at the crime scene to assist Brandon.

The back door of the church was cluttered with boards and shingles that had fallen from the decaying roof. A heavy undergrowth of weeds in the backyard of the church made passage through it difficult at best. An alley paralleled the street at the back of the church property. Brandon examined the area around the churchyard for any signs of clothing or blood. There was no blood outside the church. Using a flashlight and starting at the entryway to the church, Inspector Brandon began an inch-by-inch exam-

ination of the floor for any signs of blood. He found no blood on the floor except around where the body lay. This suggested to the investigator that the boy had been assaulted and killed inside the church.

Brandon took care to collect the two sections of wooden paneling that held the bloody tennis shoe patterns. After retrieving those, he directed his attention to a shiny glass bottle near the west wall of the church. Its lack of dust indicated that it had only been there for a short period of time. Closer examination of the bottle revealed that it was an empty 40-ounce Stag beer bottle. Brandon noted it on the evidence receipt and packaged the bottle for its trip to the crime laboratory.

The crime scene investigator packaged the inverted pair of blue jeans that lay on the floor. The investigator thought about his own children, who were close in age to the slain boy. He thought about the heartache and sorrow of the dead child's relatives. But being a professional, Brandon knew that while working this case, there was no room for personal feelings. He had a job to do and that was to identify through physical evidence the person responsible for the murder.

Walking out into the sunlight, Brandon squinted as he surveyed the crowd that had gathered outside the yellow barrier tape. The news media had gotten wind of the brutal murder. TV crews and newspaper teams had converged on the neighborhood. They were interviewing people in the street and taking statements from anyone who would talk to them.

Agent Blaha spoke to Inspector Brandon at the edge of the churchyard.

"We need to check with East St. Louis [police] to see who was inside the church and if they were wearing ProWings," suggested Blaha.

"Let's ask J.W. if he knows who discovered the body," stated Brandon.

Brandon walked over to Detective J.W. Cowan and inquired about the people who had discovered the boy's body. Cowan answered with the names of the people who reported finding the child's body. Brandon wrote down the names and addresses and turned to walk away, but then stopped and spoke again.

"J.W., did you notice anyone in the neighborhood wearing ProWing tennis shoes?"

"Uh-huh. That Lawson boy had on some ProWings when he was standing in the street," replied the streetwise detective.

"Which Lawson was it?" inquired Brandon.

"Carl Lawson. He's sitting on the porch of the house where the boy was missing from," stated Cowan.

Brandon and Blaha walked up the street, three houses west of the church, to the Lawson residence. Carl Lawson and his relatives were seated on the wooden porch at the front of the house. This was the house where little Terrence Jones had been staying while his mother worked.

The hot afternoon sun had driven the temperature up over 90 degrees. Barefoot children in shorts played in the front yard of the brown shingled house.

"Carl, we need to talk to you," Agent Blaha said to Lawson.

"Man, what you want with me?" asked Lawson.

"We need to eliminate the shoes of anyone who was inside the church where the boy's body was," replied Brandon.

"I walked up to the front door and looked in and saw the body," Lawson said.

"We still need your shoes, Carl," advised Agent Blaha.

"These are the only shoes I have," came the reply from Lawson, who was now becoming irritated with the request. He hesitated a moment, then reached down and untied his tennis shoes. Standing up, Lawson kicked his right leg in the air and sent the tennis shoe on his right foot tumbling through the air toward the investigators. Shortly thereafter, his left shoe was delivered in the same fashion. Blaha bent over to pick up the pair of ProWing tennis shoes from the ground. Smiling at Lawson, he thanked him for the shoes.

Agent Blaha handed the shoes to Inspector Brandon. Lawson walked into the house while the investigators interviewed the people seated on the porch. Blaha and Brandon watched as Carl Lawson walked back out of the house onto the porch. He was now wearing a pair of fuzzy pink open-toed houseshoes that were about two sizes too small for him. Holding back laughter, the sleuths walked back to where Brandon's squad car was parked.

Opening the trunk of his squad car to obtain an evidence bag, Inspector Brandon examined the shoes worn by Carl Lawson. They were not new shoes, but they appeared to have been recently washed. The soles of the tennis shoes had no grease or grass stains on them. The shoes were packaged and secured in the trunk of the squad car. Brandon

CHRISTMAS BABIES

by Christopher Keane and William D. Black, M.D.

Pocket Star Books: New York, N.Y.

Paperback—280 Pages—\$4.99.

Reviewed by LISA FAULKS

IF YOU relish medical thrillers, *Christmas Babies* is a book you will thoroughly enjoy and one that will be difficult to forget.

Authors Christopher Keane and William D. Black, M.D., take us into the horrifying world of genetic engineering where the sacredness of conception is being violated and where many lives are being sacrificed in a battle to eliminate the fear of death through the perfecting of human beings. But, perfection is far from the reality that exists inside the laboratories of DNA, Incorporated.

DNA, Inc. is operated by a deranged scientist named Dr. Bradley Burns and financed by a twisted senator named Curt Manheim. Their warped no-

tions have brought them together while their strong convictions have led them to commit the most horrendous crimes against humanity—supposedly for “the good of mankind.”

The book's central character is Dr. Josh Heller, a gynecologist/obstetrician, who has been experiencing a terrifying increase in deaths among his patients shortly after delivery for no apparent reason. What explanation can Dr. Heller give the anxiously waiting fathers who are expecting to see their wives and newborn bundles from heaven, but who are instead greeted by the news of the loss of their wives and are given frightful-looking babies from hell? All the babies have mysteriously similar features of shocking red hair and eerie green eyes—but that is the least of the horror.

Simultaneously, the doctor's closest friends and colleagues are dying one by one in freak accidents, each under the most unusual and suspicious circumstances. Yet, for Dr. Josh Heller, the nightmare is only just beginning.

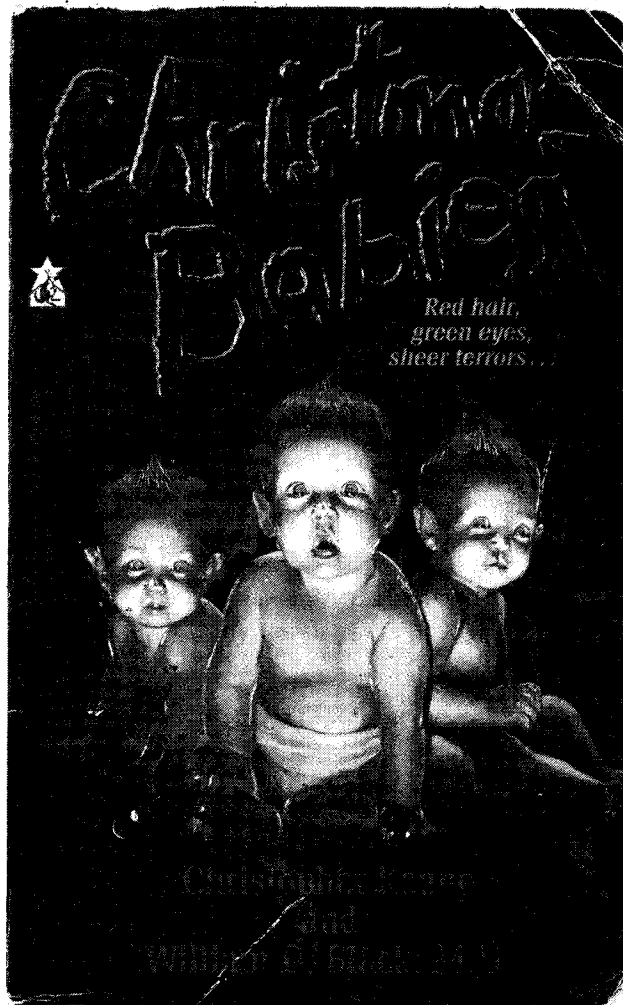
Pat Heller, Dr. Heller's wife, is a medical reporter who has just accepted a dream assignment to investigate the elusive and enigmatic Senator Curt Manheim. But what Pat uncovers during her research quickly begins to turn her dream into a living nightmare as she begins to piece together the fiendish plot Manheim has planned to unleash on the world along with his deadly partner, Dr. Burns.

Pulled apart by the individual challenges confronting them, the Hellers are unaware that each of them has somehow latched on to a separate piece of the puzzle. How the two are drawn into life-threatening danger in uncovering the monstrous DNA project will keep you on the edge of your seat.

Authors Christopher Keane and William D. Black, M.D., manage to evoke every emotion from frustration to elation in this heartstopping thriller.

William D. Black's experience as a physician helps to bring realistic medical details to the story, further intensifying the thrills so that readers won't want to put it down.

Christmas Babies will have you breathlessly turning each page. Don't miss the opportunity. Experience *Christmas Babies* today! ◆◆◆



then departed the crime scene en route to the morgue.

In the hospital morgue, Terrence Jones' body lay on the stainless steel table. Inspector Busch stood by the body to ensure that the evidence chain would not be altered. He awaited the arrival of Inspector Dee Heil with the portable laser. Earlier in the year, Busch, Heil, and David Peck, a forensic scientist, had worked a murder case in which a fingerprint was developed on the skin of the deceased with the use of laser equipment.

Brandon, Heil, and Peck arrived at the morgue to process the body for physical evidence. Heil set up the portable laser on a chair next to the morgue table. He handed Brandon and Peck the orange-colored goggles, which they donned. Putting on a pair of the orange goggles, Heil flipped the switch to turn on the laser. A brilliant blue-green light traveled down the fiber optic quartz cable. The overhead lights in the morgue were turned off to allow the laser operator to focus the four-inch sphere of light on the boy's body.

Looking through the orange goggles, which filter out the blue-green light and leave only the yellowish laser light visible, the forensic examiners now covered the surface of the victim's body, four inches at a time. Hair, fibers, body fluids, and other substances take on a fluorescence when exposed to the argon-ion laser light. Heil observed several hairs, which appeared to be animal in nature, on the boy's body. Brandon collected the foreign hairs from the victim's body. No fingerprints were discovered on the body.

A forensic pathologist joined the investigators in the examination. Medical analysis revealed five gaping stab wounds in the child's chest. Four additional stab wounds were observed in his back. The left side of Terrence's throat had been slashed. No medical determination could be made on whether or not the boy had been sexually assaulted.

Brandon departed the morgue after the additional evidence from the body was collected. Nine hours had passed since he began his investigation into the death of Terrence Jones. The next phase of his job was to submit the evidence to the different sections of the crime laboratory.

Detective Sandy Muckensturm, a 17-year veteran of the East St. Louis Police Department, was assigned to do the follow-up investigation in the Terrence Jones murder case. Muckensturm had started with the police department as a

patrol officer and worked hard to achieve her promotion to the detective section. During her years as a patrol officer, she had to respond to all types of calls as would any of her fellow male officers.

In the city of East St. Louis, with a population of 45,000 and an average homicide rate of 60 persons slain, over one percent of its citizens are murdered yearly. With courage and dedication, Detective Muckensturm braved the violent streets of the city. Her duties took her into disturbance calls, bar fights, and, on several occasions, into shooting episodes. Despite years of street work, the detective maintained her soft, feminine side, which she shared with family and friends.

Sandy Muckensturm perused the initial responding officer's reports, making notes from time to time as she read. She began to list witnesses who she would later interview in the course of her investigation. As a seasoned investigator, she knew the importance of the crime scene and forensic work that followed the processing of the scene. Her next step would be to meet with Inspector Brandon to become familiar with the crime scene.

Brandon met with Muckensturm at the East St. Louis Police Department. After several hours, they covered the details and photos of the brutal murder. Now it was up to Muckensturm to hit the streets and pursue the killer. She would be working alone, but that would be no deterrent for this woman.

Driving through the neighborhood where the murder had occurred, Muckensturm parked in front of the abandoned church. Walking into the crime scene, she studied the interior of the structure. She walked down the street to the house where the boy had disappeared from. The people in the house seemed nervous during the interview. During the neighborhood canvass, she felt a palpable fear among the residents. This wasn't the usual fear of a crime wave that accompanies this type of case. There was something going on in the neighborhood that was making these people scared.

The Latent Print Section of the Metro-East Laboratory had received the sections of paneling with the bloody shoe patterns, the beer bottle collected in the church, and the tennis shoes seized from Carl Lawson. Forensic scientist David Peck examined the bloody ProWing patterns on the paneling. He photographed the bloody designs left by the tennis shoe. The class characteristics

of the design were made by a ProWing tennis shoe.

Peck then examined the ProWing tennis shoes seized from Carl Lawson. The bottom of the soles of the tennis shoes appeared unusually clean. There were no small rocks or glass particles lodged between the ridges that composed the design on the sole of the shoes. There weren't any of the expected grass or grease stains on the shoes that usually occur with normal wear. The shoes were not new, and they did appear to have been worn considerably.

The second part of the examination of Lawson's ProWings involved searching for individual characteristics. Individual characteristics occur when the sole of the shoe receives cuts, tears, and nicks during everyday wear. Peck inked the bottoms of Lawson's tennis shoes. He placed the shoes on a section of white paper, which left a black impression of the design of the bottoms of the shoes. He then placed the photograph of the bloody impression of a left shoe collected at the crime scene next to the inked impression of Lawson's left tennis shoe.

Examining the bloody print from the crime scene, Peck noticed a nick in the circle design in the ball area of the print. Checking the inked impression of Lawson's left shoe, he discovered the presence of the same nick in the exact same area. Peck found eight individual characteristics that matched the bloody shoe prints at the crime scene with the ProWing tennis shoes that Lawson wore.

The phone on Inspector Brandon's desk buzzed and the intercom light flashed. Brandon stopped writing as he waited for a response on the intercom.

"Brandon, I got a match on Lawson's shoes to the shoe prints on the paneling," stated Peck in an excited voice.

"Oh, that's great. I'll be right up," Brandon said. Brandon walked up the stairwell from his office on the second floor of the laboratory to the Latent Print Section located on the third floor. After viewing the points of identification on the shoes, Brandon called Detective Muckensturm to relay the good news.

Muckensturm was happy about the physical evidence, but her joy was brief. She applied for an arrest warrant for Carl Lawson but was refused the warrant until additional evidence was obtained. Now she knew why the people in the neighborhood were acting so strange. They were afraid of the man who was still living among them.

Muckensturm decided that she would

change her interview tactics. She would contact each resident in the neighborhood by phone and arrange an interview. Maybe this would prove to be more fruitful. After a few interviews, Muckensturm learned that she was up against a man who had a "mad dog" reputation on the street. Apparently, people were terrified of Carl Lawson.

But this hard-nosed female sleuth would not be intimidated by this man. Sandy Muckensturm brought him in for an interview. Lawson sat in front of the detective's desk during the interview. He told her that he was in love with the dead boy's mother and was very upset about the child's death. He told the investigator that he knew nothing about when the child disappeared and that he had never been in the abandoned church.

But Sandy Muckensturm had done her homework on Carl Lawson's past. She knew that he had once served time for beating a woman and two children with a baseball bat. Casting a glance back across her desk at Lawson, she confronted him about his prior act of violence against a family. Lawson began to cry and told the detective that he was in love with the slain boy's mother and would not have killed her son. Sandy leaned back in the chair and looked directly at Lawson. When he looked up at her, she told him that some people on the street believed he had killed the boy to get back at the boy's mother because she had stopped dating him. Lawson would not respond to Muckensturm's statement.

In the interviews that followed the next day, Muckensturm was able to locate several witnesses who had seen something the night Terrence Jones was killed. Sara Rivers told the investigators that around midnight, she had seen Terrence with a man near the intersection by the church. She recalled the man was wearing blue jeans and a dark-colored shirt. Terrence was wearing a T-shirt and a pair of white underwear. Within a week after giving the statement, the elderly lady was found dead inside her house, a victim of an apparent heart attack.

Harold Zerigh came forward and told Detective Muckensturm that he had seen Carl Lawson walking from the church on the night Terrence Jones was killed. He described Lawson as wearing blue jeans, a blue jacket, and tennis shoes. Zerigh said he asked Lawson what he was doing coming from the church. Lawson had told Zerigh that he was taking his dog home, yet there was

no dog with Lawson.

Cathy Williams told the detective that she, too, had seen Carl Lawson around midnight with Terrence Jones standing under the streetlight at the intersection by the church. She gave the same descriptions of the clothing worn by the boy and man as did other witnesses. A few days after giving the statement to police, Cathy Williams was at a neighborhood barbecue when Carl Lawson walked up to her.

"You better stop that Nancy Drew s--- because before I go to jail, I'll get you," Lawson warned Williams.

"You know you killed him," replied the frightened woman as she walked away.

Later that week, Harold Zerigh returned home to find that his dog was dead. Apparently, the dog had been poisoned. Three days later, Zerigh's house was burned to the ground while he was at work. The fire was determined to be arson.

Detective Muckensturm was faced with the problem of getting enough evidence to get Carl Lawson off the street. Time was running out for some of the witnesses. Several had moved to other states out of fear for their lives and their family's lives. But Carl Lawson's reign of terror came to an end when he approached Cathy Williams the second time.

"I know that you've been at the police department and told them you saw me with T.J. that night he disappeared," Lawson said. "I going to get you. One woman said she saw me, and she died."

Because of Cathy Williams' courage to come forward and testify about the threats against her, an arrest warrant was issued for Carl Lawson. He was arrested and brought down to the East St. Louis Police Department. There, he was placed in the holding cell. After Muckensturm walked back into the booking room, Lawson charged the heavy glass window of the holding cell. He slammed his fist on the glass and shook his head at Muckensturm as he glared at her.

After Carl Lawson's arrest, 30 witnesses came forward and gave statements in the case. Several people confirmed that Lawson had made threats that if Terrence's mother left him, he would kill her or one of her children. Other witnesses told of Lawson washing his ProWing tennis shoes on the night of the murder. Additional witnesses put Lawson with the child near the church around midnight.

Carl Lawson was charged with the

murder of Terrence Jones and incarcerated at the St. Clair County Jail. While being fingerprinted by Inspector Brandon at that location, Lawson asked Brandon if he thought someone would write a book or make a movie about him.

On September 24, 1990, a trial was held in the Circuit Court of the Twentieth Judicial Circuit in Belleville, Illinois. Carl Lawson sat quietly at the defense table next to his lawyer as the jurors took their seats in the jurors' section. St. Clair County Assistant State's Attorney James Stern began the prosecution for the state.

Stern presented evidence showing that Carl Lawson had threatened to kill one of his ex-girlfriend's children if she stopped dating him. He was seen with the victim late at night near the abandoned church. The boy's body was clothed in the same manner that witnesses described when they saw him with Lawson under the streetlight at the intersection.

The bloody shoe prints at the crime scene could only have occurred while the blood was in the liquid state. Those shoes belonged to and were worn by Carl Lawson. They were identified as the shoes that had made the bloody prints. Lawson's fingerprints were identified on the beer bottle and a matchbook cover collected inside the church.

The trial lasted six days. During the trial, Harold Zerigh, the brave man who had lost his dog and house during the investigation, would not be intimidated. He took the stand and testified against Lawson.

On October 2, 1990, after six hours of deliberation, the jury returned to the courtroom with a verdict.

"We, the jury, find the defendant, Carl Lawson, guilty of the offense of first-degree murder," read the foreman.

On October 3, 1990, at 2:50 p.m., the death sentence was imposed on Carl Lawson by the court. He now awaits his fate on death row in an Illinois prison. ♦♦♦

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Sara Rivers, Harold Zerigh, and Cathy Williams are not the real names of the persons so named in the foregoing story. Fictitious names have been used because there is no reason for public interest in the identities of these persons.

**BUY U.S.
SAVINGS
BONDS**

Made Him Kill

from page 24

Also joining the intense search as word spread about Kathy Busch's disappearance were parents of Kathy's classmates. Later, an Oklahoma City Police Department helicopter took to the skies and flew low over the search area, its whirling chopper blades loud in the night air and its spotlight sweeping brightly over vacant lots, playgrounds, and darkened streets.

A neighbor woman who was assisting in the search recalled that her own daughter had walked to school with Kathy in the past few days. She and other searchers were hoping against hope that the missing girl might be hiding somewhere with a friend. But relatives of the child were convinced that although Kathy might inadvertently be late for a deadline to return home, she would never worry her mother intentionally.

Major James McDaniel of the uniformed division, second-in-command of the Yukon Police Department under Police Chief James Huffman, was in charge of the search efforts. He directed the officers to search deserted school playgrounds and churchyards as well as vacant fields, empty buildings, dark alleys, and side streets. Other officers combing the southwest part of town went door to door in neighborhoods, seeking information on the missing schoolgirl.

As the search passed the midnight hour without any trace of Kathy Busch, a reserve deputy from the Oklahoma County Sheriff's Department moved through the deserted alley behind the Chisholm West Shopping Center. This was a business district about three blocks from the apartment complex where Kathy and her mother lived.

As he swept his flashlight beam down the empty alley, the bright light caught a flash of color next to a large dumpster behind a drug store. The light reflected off a bicycle propped against the dumpster side. Moving closer, the deputy saw that it was a girl's aqua and pink bicycle, and he saw something else that sent him hurrying to give the alarm. He looked only long enough to see that there was a wrapped bundle lying on top of the trash pile in the dumpster, a bundle the size of a small child's body.

The first officers to respond to the

deputy's summons quickly determined that it was the nude body of a small girl, wrapped in what looked like a sheet and a thin mattress cover or blanket. Within a few minutes, the pitiful crumpled heap in the dumpster was identified as the body of little Kathy Busch.

Detective-Captain Bob Thompson was notified at his home shortly after 1:30 a.m. on Tuesday that the missing-child search had now become a homicide case.

The detective-captain gave orders to call out other officers and also to bring the necessary equipment to the scene to photographically record and process it for evidence. By the time Captain Thompson arrived, the alley had been roped off with yellow crime scene tape to keep any spectators or unauthorized personnel from the immediate area of the dumpster. McDaniel and Sergeant Mark Kemerly were in charge of the officers who secured the scene.

A call was also placed for an investigator from the medical examiner's office in Oklahoma City. After photos of the body and area were taken, the small body was lifted gently from the corner of the metal dumpster and placed on a stretcher. Captain Thompson noticed that a piece of clear, two-inch-wide tape had been placed partly around the bundle. When the outer coverings were totally removed, the investigators could see that the girl appeared to have been beaten and stabbed.

It was a grim scene that was illuminated by the headlights of police units and beams of officers' flashlights as the tiny body was loaded into an ambulance. The victim's bike was also carefully picked up to avoid smearing any fingerprints that might be on it. It was placed in a police unit to be taken to headquarters where it could be gone over thoroughly for latent prints or any fibers or particles that might have adhered to the frame. The dumpster exterior was also examined and dusted for possible prints and other potential evidence.

Investigators gingerly and meticulously sorted through the garbage and trash in the large dumpster, looking for the victim's clothing or other evidence. But the clothing was not there.

While an officer was sent to the girl's home to inform her mother and family about the tragic end of the search, other officers were assigned by Captain Thompson to dig through other dumpsters in the alley and elsewhere in the shopping center. Within a short time, Patrolman Cliff Dacus discovered the

victim's clothing in another dumpster, buried amid the other contents.

The clothing had been put into a plastic bag. Among the items were the victim's Mickey Mouse sweatshirt, her blue jeans, socks, and shoes, and a pair of small panties, bloodstained and ripped into shreds as though torn with great force from Kathy's tiny body. Also recovered from the same dumpster was Kathy's necklace, which had been put into a milk carton and jammed deep into the garbage.

At this early hour of the morning, when winter's darkness still enveloped the shopping center, there was no one around to be quizzed by officers as to what they might have noticed the previous night. Most of the stores in the center had closed early in the evening anyway.

When the investigators had done all they could at the crime scene, the alley was secured until the hunt for evidence and witnesses could be conducted after sunrise.

Captain Thompson returned to the police station to confer with his investigators and plan their next step in what was Yukon's first murder probe in more than a decade. The detective-captain's first action was to launch a search of local police files for the names of any sex offenders living in the area, especially any who were recently released from prison. In addition, county and state officers were alerted to be on the lookout for any suspicious hitchhikers on the highways around Yukon.

The computer search for previous sex offenders came up with the names of more than a dozen men known to be living in the general area, some of them in Oklahoma City. All would have to be located and checked out, if no other leads surfaced within the next few hours.

Sex crimes involving children, molestations, rapes, and murders, were not all that uncommon in the nearby big metropolis of Oklahoma City. But it was the first such major crime of this kind that any of the Yukon authorities could recall in their community.

Though further investigation in the shopping center where Kathy's body had been found was suspended until the daylight hours, investigators continued to talk to as many residents of the apartment complex as they could find. There were 250 apartment units in the large facilities, which meant that the sleuths had a big task ahead of them. Someone must have seen or heard something suspicious at the time the girl was abducted

and slain, Captain Thompson figured.

On the other hand, Thompson realized that if Kathy had been grabbed and attacked shortly after she had begun playing outside, it was possible that many of the apartment dwellers were not at home—they might have been still at work, away on routine after-work errands, or eating out. Also, televisions frequently blotted out sounds that might have been considered suspicious or unusual.

But Captain Thompson had a gut feeling that the key to the mystery lay in one of those apartments and with its occupant or occupants. Kathy's mother had stressed it was unlikely that her daughter would have strayed far from the breezeway where she usually played or rode her bicycle.

As is routine in such cases, detectives intended to check any male acquaintance of Kathy's mother. More than likely, a total stranger was involved, but the detectives knew they could overlook no possibility at this stage of the murder probe. Regretfully, the sleuths knew, the human race is not unlike the feline species in some respects: Males sometimes attack the kittens.

Child abuse and deaths involving

men outside the family circle who are acquainted with the children through other relationships—such as an acquaintance or a boyfriend of a divorced mother—are on the rise throughout the nation. In a recent news story, one official with the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth said, "It's terribly frightening. And the deaths tell only one part of the story."

So with this in mind, Captain Thompson and his probers prepared to broaden their investigation, planning to talk to any males who came in routine contact with the little girl or her mother. They did this in addition to running down the apartment residents and the growing list of known offenders that was being put together.

As news of Kathy Busch's murder was spread by TV and radio that morning in Yukon, fear began to grow among families with small children. As a result, many parents drove their children to school, even though the distance might be short.

Television news crews flocked into town from Oklahoma City, shooting film of the dumpster crime scene and interviewing citizens on the worst murder case that any of the locals could remem-

ber blotting their small city.

One woman said, "I couldn't believe it when I heard. I couldn't believe something like that happened. I've got kids, too, and all morning I've been looking at people's faces to see if they're the one I should be scared of."

That seemed to be the consensus among the townspeople, that the child killer might well be anyone who resided there. It was obvious that fear had descended over Yukon like a black fog.

Then, at 9:30 a.m., as the investigators were out combing the shopping center and the apartment complex where Kathy had lived, a telephone call made to the 911 emergency number was switched to the Yukon Police Department. Officer Cary Bryant was the dispatcher on duty. A young man's voice at the other end of the line exclaimed, "I'm the one that did that to the girl!"

The dispatcher kept calm and asked the caller for his name and location. He continued to talk and keep the man on the line, but at the same time he signaled other officers in the station and gave them the address.

Captain Rick Baxter and Sergeant Rick Levann ran to a patrol car and sped to a store, the one near the victim's

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apartment building, from where the man had called.

When the police unit braked to a stop at a phone booth outside the store, the officers saw a 6-foot, 230-pound, round-faced man waiting there. The burly man, who appeared to be in his late teens or early 20s, admitted that he was the one who had called. He identified himself as 20-year-old Floyd Allen Medlock.

As the officers took him into custody, the dark-haired suspect said he was carrying the weapon that had killed the girl. He then gingerly lifted a dagger-like knife from his belt and handed it to the startled officers.

After warning him of his rights, lawmen placed a handcuffed Medlock in the patrol car and drove him to the police station. There, Captain Thompson questioned the nervous young man, who said that he would make a statement. The detective-captain set up a video camera with which the statement would be recorded, again warning Medlock fully of his legal rights before allowing him to continue to talk.

In the next 30 minutes, hesitating only on the sexual details, the heavyset suspect related a chilling story.

Floyd Medlock told Thompson that he had a first-floor apartment at the same complex where the victim lived. It was about 150 yards from the Busches' second-floor apartment.

Medlock said that the victim knocked on his apartment door shortly after 4:30 p.m. and told him that she was hungry. He let her inside. Kathy chatted on in a friendly monologue as Medlock cooked some macaroni and cheese for her, the suspect said. Kathy mentioned that she and her mother had lived in the apartment where Medlock now lived before they moved to their present apartment.

Looking about the interior, the victim peered through a bedroom door and told him that "it was messy" as it had been sometimes when she lived there, Medlock said.

Suddenly, Medlock continued, he grabbed Kathy by the arm, and she struggled to get away. It was then that he struck and beat her about the face and head. He then stabbed her with a steak knife, he said.

Medlock said he decided to kill Kathy by stabbing her with the dagger in the back of the head, which he claimed to have learned from a horror movie was the best spot to inflict a fatal stab wound. Medlock said he was an ardent fan of horror and slasher movies.

The suspect was hesitant to discuss

the sexual molestation of the victim, at first saying he had tried only to penetrate her with his fingers. An autopsy conducted later disclosed that the victim had been raped and sodomized and stabbed three times in addition to the severe beating inflicted about the head.

After Kathy was dead, Medlock related, he took her small body into the bathroom and washed off the blood. Then he wrapped her in a sheet and crammed the tiny body into a cardboard box. He placed the box and its horrible contents beneath his television set and watched TV until it got dark.

When darkness finally fell, Medlock said he removed the dead girl from the box and wrapped her in the sheet and mattress cover. He carried her to his car after first making sure that the area was deserted. Placing the body inside, Medlock returned to get the victim's bicycle, which she had left outside his apartment. He put the bike into his car and covered it with a blanket.

Medlock waited a while longer before driving over to the shopping center three blocks away. Entering the dark alley, Medlock stopped at the dumpster behind the drugstore, and after again making certain that he was alone, he dropped the bundled body on top of the trash inside. Next, he leaned the victim's bicycle against the side of the large metal container. He then drove back to his apartment and went to bed, he said.

The next morning, Medlock went to work at a small restaurant where he was a dishwasher. A remark made by a woman employee after news of the Busch murder had become the talk of the town spurred him to call the 911 number and surrender, Medlock said in his statement. Apparently, the woman's caustic comment had brought Medlock to a realization of the true horror of the little girl's sexual molestation and death. What the woman had said angrily was that the girl's killer should have his testicles nailed to the wall.

Whether or not the woman's remark had actually prompted Floyd Medlock's decision to give himself up, the action followed a pattern he had established in a previous misdeed, Captain Thompson learned. When Medlock was quizzed later, after giving his confession, he admitted that he had burglarized an apartment in the apartment complex where he was living in a Nevada town, with the intention of attacking a little girl. As it turned out, the girl was not at home, he said. This had happened in 1987 when he was a teenager. Failing

to find the girl, Medlock had taken some jewelry and other items, then set the apartment on fire. He then called a 911 number to report the fire and that he had seen two young men running from the scene.

Medlock said he was from Pahrump, Nevada, but had traveled extensively in the past months in Nevada, Colorado, Florida, Tennessee, and California. In a Florida crime spree, Medlock had pulled an armed robbery and also ripped off a cocaine dealer, he said in the videotaped statement.

Medlock said he had arrived in Yukon only 10 days before the slaying of Kathy Busch.

The Yukon officers obtained a warrant to search both the suspect's apartment and his car. In the apartment, the detectives found a roll of clear plastic tape that matched the piece of tape found on the outside of the bundle containing Kathy Busch's body. They also recovered the bloodstained box that Medlock said had contained Kathy's small body while he waited to move it under cover of darkness. Bloodstains were also found in the bathroom.

Officers also took several knives from the suspect's residence. Later, based on information given by Medlock, they recovered a steak knife allegedly used to inflict the first wounds before the fatal thrust was made with the dagger. The steak knife was located in a dumpster in the shopping center alley, according to Captain Thompson.

Medlock was charged with first-degree murder and confined, with bond denied, in the county jail at El Reno.

Medlock's trial was scheduled to start on Monday, February 4, 1991, in the court of District Judge Edward C. Cunningham in the courthouse at El Reno. The sheriff's department clamped tight security on the courtroom as the jury selection was set to begin. A dozen deputies were stationed at the courtroom entrance. Spectators and others entering the room had to walk through a metal detector formerly owned by an airline company. The courtroom was filled with almost 100 prospective jurors and spectators.

Then, in a surprise move, Medlock's attorney announced to the court that his client wanted to plead guilty to the first-degree murder charge and allow the judge to determine the punishment. In Oklahoma, this is called a "blind plea," possible when the prosecution and defense cannot agree on a negotiated plea. The state was seeking the death penalty in the case. Other sentence options were

life imprisonment and life without parole.

The judge accepted the defendant's plea and said a presentencing investigation would be made. The sentencing hearing was set for March 11th.

When the hearing opened on that date, District Attorney Cathy Stocker and Assistant District Attorney Mike Gahan told the judge that the state wanted the death penalty for Floyd Medlock, who was described as a "dangerous criminal who will continue to be a threat to society." The defense sought a life sentence.

The prosecution called three witnesses from Nevada to testify about a condominium burglary and arson in Pahrump, Nevada, in 1987, when Medlock, then a teenager, had called 911 to report the fire and claimed he had seen two young men fleeing the scene. He later admitted to the break-in and arson after investigators pointed to discrepancies in his statements, the witnesses said.

The defense attacked the testimony by contending that burglary and arson were property crimes and not violent crimes. However, the judge overruled a

motion to strike the testimony. A dozen investigators and medical experts were called by the state to outline the evidentiary case against Medlock.

After Judge Cunningham denied a motion for a directed verdict on the grounds that the state had not proven circumstances sufficient to warrant the death penalty, the defense lawyer made his opening statement.

Describing his client as someone who had suffered severe sexual abuse from an early age, the defense attorney asserted that Floyd Medlock was struggling with a "mental deterioration" that he could not control on the day he attacked and killed Kathy Busch. The attorney reiterated his contention that because of "mitigating circumstances," which he would demonstrate as the trial progressed, Medlock should be given life imprisonment rather than the death penalty.

When the defense called a psychologist to the stand to back up its claims, the courtroom spectators were in for a bizarre twist in the already shocking case. The psychologist testified that Medlock had a multiple personality disorder caused by severe physical, mental,

and emotional abuse. Under hypnosis, Medlock had told a therapist of being forced as a young child to commit a sex act with a relative who would then lock Medlock in a closet and leave him there for long periods of time.

To deal with the trauma, the psychologist continued, Medlock "split apart in different segments of his consciousness" and had developed a second personality, an alter ego named "Charlie," who took control of Medlock at times of extreme stress. In the hypnotic trance, the witness said, Medlock claimed he heard a male voice that told him to hurt people. If Medlock refused the voice, it would go away, but it would leave him with a severe headache. The voice, which Medlock said he had been hearing since age 15, would come back whenever Medlock got angry.

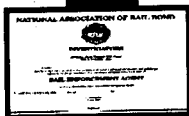
The significance of this development, the psychologist told the court, was that it was not Floyd Medlock who killed Kathy Busch. The real murderer was Charlie!

To make matters more confusing, Medlock had told the hypnotist that he "didn't kill a little girl" when he killed Kathy Busch. In his mind, he had killed

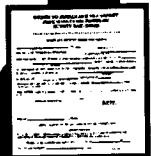
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"Dave," the person who abused him when he was a child.

The real shocker came when the video of Floyd Medlock being questioned under hypnosis was played in the courtroom. In the taped statement, Medlock said he was cooking macaroni and cheese for the victim, who had come into his apartment, when Charlie said to him, "Kill him! Kill him!" The psychologist reminded the jury that Medlock perceived the girl as Dave.

Medlock continued on the tape to say that when he refused, Charlie got a knife and attacked the girl. He related that she lost consciousness when he hit her in the face and throat. He said as "Charlie" carried "Dave" into the bathroom, "he" was struggling and scratching as "Charlie stuck [Dave's] head in the toilet."

Medlock said the girl was dead when she was sexually molested, adding that Charlie was looking for Dave's privates.

Two psychologists testifying for the state disputed the defense claim of the defendant's multiple personality disorder, one saying that Charlie had conveniently appeared when Medlock's neck, "figuratively speaking, is in the noose." He said it was convenient for Medlock to pawn the bad things "off on Charlie," who didn't appear until Medlock's arrest.

The defense also introduced a report by a psychologist who claimed that Medlock's alter ego hadn't been warned of his constitutional rights, hadn't seen a lawyer, and was not competent to stand trial.

The judge, after reading the report, mused, "That brings in a whole new legal system of advising multiple personalities of their Miranda rights."

(Later, after the trial, a detective commented sardonically, "My alter ego Charlie advised his Charlie of his rights.")

In closing arguments in the penalty hearing, the prosecution argued that "the voodoo psychiatry of the defense offends our common sense." The state's attorney described the murder as one that was "carefully planned." It was argued further that Medlock probably would commit other acts of violence, so death was the only proper punishment.

The defense stressed that the defendant was a victim himself of "intolerable abuse" and should be sentenced to life instead of being put to death.

At midafternoon on Friday, March 15, 1991, Judge Cunningham announced his decision: Medlock should be executed by lethal injection. He said

the state had proven beyond a reasonable doubt that the crime was "heinous, atrocious, or cruel" and that Medlock would continue to be a threat to society.

"The murder was both torturous and serious physical abuse," the judge declared.

Judge Cunningham pointed out that the victim, who weighed less than 60 pounds, was "severely and savagely beaten" by a man 6 feet tall and weighing 225 pounds. He also reminded the defense that the medical examiner had testified that Kathy was "raped and sodomized before she died." Judge Cunningham also said that an examination of the girl's panties revealed they were "completely ripped, torn, and shredded." The evidence refuted Medlock's claim that he had simply removed Kathy's panties and that she was dead when he sexually molested her.

The judge concluded firmly, "If he

were ever released, any woman or child on the streets would not be safe because of his inability to control himself.... He was guilty of a horrible, staggering crime."

Judge Cunningham set Medlock's execution for June 10, 1991, but the verdict was to be appealed to the State Court of Criminal Appeals. The execution date was expected to be delayed by the subsequent appeal process, attorneys said.

Meanwhile, Floyd Medlock has been transferred to Oklahoma's death row.



EDITOR'S NOTE:

Dave is not the real name of the person so named in the foregoing story. A fictitious name has been used because there is no reason for public interest in the identity of this person.

Tiny Weapon

from page 14

for fingerprints. The prints were Carter's.

Detective Richard Hooper had obtained the confession he wanted. There was no doubt that Robert Carter had killed Beverly Holzmilller, but despite the cold brutality of the homicide, the confession did not guarantee that Carter would be convicted or murder. His recital contained comments that a clever defense attorney might use to convince a jury that there were mitigating circumstances. Potentially, that could lead to a conviction that carried very little prison time. The callousness of this killing, in Hooper's opinion, deserved no less than a sentence of life in prison.

But that is the domain of the district attorney's office, and Hooper passed the case on to them.

A preliminary hearing was conducted to determine if there was enough evidence to even try Carter on murder charges. Defense Attorney Michael Horan argued Carter's case and made a strong effort to convince the court that a lesser charge than murder should be applied. He focused on Carter's story that Holzmilller had provoked him into a frenzy by taunting him and telling him that she had infected him with AIDS. But with information provided by Dr.

Joseph Halka, who had performed the autopsy, the counsel finally agreed to stipulate that an analysis of the victim's blood showed that she did not have AIDS.

Halka testified about the many injuries sustained by Holzmilller. The curved linear wound on her left breast was referred to as a "tease" wound, suggesting that it had been inflicted as an overture to the bloody orgy of stabbing that followed.

The court ordered Robert Carter to stand trial for first-degree murder.

In California, as in most states, the legal process for major crimes is painfully slow. Wrangling over fine legal points and postponements of trial dates can cause delays of months or even years.

On June 12, 1990, well over two years after the death of Beverly Holzmilller, Robert Carter finally went to trial. Five days prior to that, his defense attorney had made a motion to have his confession suppressed so that it could not be used as evidence, but the judge ruled against him.

The responsibility for prosecuting Carter fell on the broad, square shoulders of Deputy District Attorney Patrick Donahue. A no-nonsense ex-officer in the United States Marine Corps and a military history buff, the tall, slim Donahue was a formidable prosecutor. But when he examined the challenge of trying Robert Carter, he could see some serious obstacles.

First, there were the self-serving statements in the confession that the defense attorney could possibly manipu-

late. Second, there had been three witnesses who had seen Robert Carter leave the party with Holzmiller, but in the ensuing two years one of the witnesses had died. It was not going to be easy to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Carter had, with premeditation, murdered Holzmiller.

Carter's confession described how the sex with Holzmiller had been consensual and rationalized an enraged response to her taunting him. It seemed far more probable to D.A. Donahue, as it had to Detective Hooper, that after Holzmiller had left the party with Carter and telephoned for a ride home, Carter had made sexual advances toward the woman. She had probably refused, and Carter had raped her at the site between the two apartment buildings. If any discussion of sexual performance or AIDS had really taken place, Holzmiller had probably used it in desperation, trying to ward off the rape. After he raped her a second time in the oil field, the prosecutor and detective surmised, Carter cold-bloodedly searched her purse for money and possibly a weapon. They reasoned that when Carter found the scissors, he decided to use them to kill Beverly so that she could not identify him as her attacker.

D.A. Donahue had the additional task of convincing the jury that the crime had been committed with "special circumstances." In order to ask for the death penalty or life in prison without the possibility of parole, California law requires that special circumstances be proved. This includes murder while committing rape and murder involving torture of the victim.

When the trial began, Defense Attorney Michael Horan, in his folksy, charming manner, did not deny that Robert Carter was responsible for the death of Beverly Holzmiller. But he hammered on the mitigation of the crime, emphasizing a scenario in which the defendant had responded in an emotional frenzy to the woman's taunting him about sexual performance and AIDS.

D.A. Pat Donahue, in his deliberate, logical manner, argued the improbability of Carter's statement that the sex acts were consensual. He asked the jury if they could really believe that this woman had consented to having sex with Carter outside in the mud, once between two apartment buildings during a driving rainstorm and again in an open oil field.

Horan countered, pointing out to the jury that the yellow sweat shirt had been

found underneath the victim's back, as if she had placed it there to be comfortable when lying down on the ground.

It was an interesting point, D.A. Donahue privately conceded. But he argued that there was no way to know who had placed the shirt there, or when. It could just as well have been thrown there by Carter prior to his wrestling the victim to the ground or placed there by Holzmiller under threat by Carter.

Donahue called the two surviving witnesses from the party to the stand. He asked, "When Mr. Carter and Mrs. Holzmiller left the party, were they kissing, or holding hands, or generally affectionate to each other?"

On the contrary, both people testified, Carter and Holzmiller were angry and were arguing loudly when they were last seen. Donahue pointed out that this was not the behavior of two people who were about to have consensual sex.

The two attorneys continued to lock horns for nine days. Robert Carter did not testify in his own behalf.

Finally, on June 21st, at 11:35 a.m., the case was given to the jury. They deliberated for less than three hours, including 50 minutes for lunch. At 2:29 p.m., they filed into the jury box and the verdict was announced.

Robert Allen Carter was found guilty of first-degree murder. The jury also found that special circumstances did apply to the crime. They rejected the allegation of torture, saying that they had not had enough evidence to prove that Carter intended to torture Holzmiller. But they did agree that Carter had raped her.

On July 27th, while Carter hung his head and refused to look up, Superior Court Judge William Bedsworth sentenced him to life in prison without the possibility of parole. "This is the hardest thing that I do, having to send someone to prison," the judge stated. "This case, however, was as cruel and heartless an act [as] I've seen....The law provides a sentence, and I will impose it."

D.A. Pat Donahue summed it up. "He's a bad guy. I just never want him out of prison."

Detective Richard Hooper put it even more succinctly. "He's a stone cold killer." ♦♦♦

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Hal Ibsen and Jerry Gelner are not the real names of the persons so named in the foregoing story. Fictitious names have been used because there is no reason for public interest in the identities of these persons.

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Gang-Raped Girl

from page 22

"Felito" Morales, the younger man, and detained him for questioning. With a relative present, Morales, a 16-year-old, seventh-grade dropout, denied any knowledge of the incident. Morales appeared nervous, but not much more jittery than a misbehaving student called into the principal's office. Police released him.

Next, officers brought in the other person identified by the anonymous caller, 29-year-old Arturo Cruz. Born in Philadelphia, Cruz's family had moved to St. Croix when he was 2, and he'd never left. Cruz calmly denied any knowledge of the incident. He, too, was released. But police officers believed neither suspect was telling the truth. They weren't sure if either man killed Cathy Gunther, but they believed both men had knowledge of the incident. So the sleuths turned up the heat.

Lawmen called back Morales the next day, informing the teen that someone had positively identified him as being seen with the victim on the night of the murder. Detectives showed him a pre-death photo of Cathy Gunther. This time, Feliciano Morales admitted recognizing the woman as someone he'd "seen around," but he said he didn't know her by name.

In fact, he said, he talked with Gunther, who was driving a red pickup, alongside the road near an Estate Profit bar during the early-morning hours of May 19th. Trying to establish an alibi, Morales told the detectives he was with an Estate Profit resident later identified as Juan Torres. The detectives added Torres' name to the list of suspects and again released Morales.

Police brought Juan Torres in for questioning. Torres admitted being with Morales and seeing Cathy Gunther on the night of the murder. But, he said, she soon drove away in her pickup truck in search of drugs, and he never saw her again after that. Police released Torres but kept his name alive as a suspect.

The detectives smelled smoke and recalled Feliciano Morales the next day to stoke the fire. They told him, after questioning Arturo Cruz and Juan Torres, they believed Morales had killed Cathy Gunther. Morales felt the pressure.

Cathy Gunther was looking to pur-

chase drugs, Morales told the investigators in the presence of a relative and a juvenile officer. "So, at that time, we were going to take her money from her."

Who was the "we?" the investigators asked.

"Me and Arturo Cruz," Morales answered. He added that he alone met Cathy Gunther along the road outside a bar in Estate Profit and got in the truck with the victim to help her find a source of drugs. They drove over the hill into the next valley to a softball field less than a half-mile away.

At the ballpark, Morales and Cathy got out of the truck and walked toward a group of three or four of Morales' friends, including Juan Torres. Soon, Arturo Cruz, carrying a freshly opened Heineken bottle, walked down the hill and joined the group. When Cathy Gunther spotted Cruz, she demanded her \$20, but Cruz denied having the money. While Cathy Gunther persisted about the \$20, Cruz and Morales conspired to rob the woman.

Suddenly, Cathy pulled a knife and attacked Cruz. Cruz evaded the knife, then cold-cocked Gunther across the forehead with the half-full beer bottle, the force breaking the green glass.

"At Machuchal ballpark," Morales told his interrogators, "Cruz hit Gunther in the head with a beer bottle, causing her head to bleed a good bit and [making her] fall down to the ground." Gunther then dropped the knife, Morales said, after Cruz hit her. She fell to the ground, stunned, then came to a little while later. "I started to hold her because she was screaming," Morales said, "and then these boys hold her and start to rape her."

After three of his friends took turns raping the victim, Morales said, Cruz asked him to help push Gunther, who was bleeding and pleading for her life, "into the back of the pickup truck, and [we] drove off." Morales got behind the wheel, with Cruz and Cathy Gunther in the back. As he drove, Morales parked in the turnaround in front of the chained gate. He got out of the truck, walked to the rear, and lowered the tailgate.

"You want to have sex?" Cathy Gunther purportedly asked. "Please don't kill me. Have sex, but please don't kill me."

So Morales put on a condom, climbed into the back of the truck with Cathy Gunther, and had sex with her. When Morales finished, Cruz told him to "pitch her down" from the truck.

With Cathy Gunther on her knees on

the ground, Cruz forced her to perform oral sex. Morales didn't want to watch, so he moved the pickup truck a few feet away and waited. About 15 minutes later, with the sun just starting to come up, Cruz yelled, "Let's go, let's go."

"[I] didn't want no one to see us at that area because of what we had done to Miss Cathy Gunther," Morales told the officers. When Cruz returned to the cab, his right pant leg full of blood, Morales asked him, "What happened?"

"I just knocked her out," Cruz said. "Don't worry, just drive the truck." But, as they drove away, Morales neither saw the victim nor heard any sounds or noise.

They drove back to Juan Torres' house in Machuchal, talked briefly with Torres, and then Morales and Cruz drove to the east end of St. Croix.

There, in the bush fringing the beach, about a mile and a half from Grassy Point, off South Shore Road, Morales drove the truck under a thick canopy of trees. Hoping to remove fingerprints and other trace evidence, the two men scrubbed the truck with beer and bleach. Afterward, they waded into the water to wash off Cathy Gunther's blood from their bodies. When they came out of the water, they noticed telltale stains on their pant legs. They cut off the leggings with a knife and flung them into overhanging branches.

While detectives continued questioning the suspect, Officer McFarlane followed the teenager's directions and found Cathy Gunther's truck concealed off the main road. It was exactly where Morales said they'd hidden it. The trees along that section of the beach concealed the truck, making it invisible from the road and the air. The red pickup smelled of bleach and beer. A Clorox bottle lay in the truck bed, along with four empty beer cans. McFarlane searched the vehicle but found no other evidentiary items and no fingerprints.

The investigating officer moved to the adjoining beach, where four pant legs dangled from three limbs—two dark-blue corduroys and two blue-jean legs. McFarlane retrieved the pant legs and, after obtaining a search warrant, went to Morales' house and found a pair of dark-blue corduroy pants with missing legs. The cuts looked recent, and the pants appeared to match perfectly the pant legs found at the beach. Taking no chances, McFarlane sent the pants and legs to an FBI serologist for testing.

Police wanted to verify Feliciano Morales' account. They rounded up Juan Torres, grilled him, and listened to

a changed tune. Yes, Torres now said, hoping to save his own skin, he recalled observing an incident involving Arturo Cruz, several others, and Cathy Gunther at the ballpark in Machuchal. He arrived at the ballpark, Torres said, and noticed Gunther down, her hair full of blood. Arturo Cruz was standing over the victim. Torres said, encouraging the others while they were raping her. Afterward, Torres watched Felito Morales drive away with the truck, Cruz in back with the victim. The last words he heard her say, Torres said, were "Please don't kill me."

Torres' story continued, corroborating more of Morales' testimony: At about six o'clock the next morning, the red truck returned to his house, but Gunther wasn't in it. Cruz and Morales told him they left the woman by the refinery. Cruz bragged about Cathy Gunther performing oral sex on him and of his taking a "big stone" and throwing it on Cathy's chest. At that point, Torres told them to leave, and Cruz and Morales drove away in Cathy Gunther's red Ford pickup truck.

The St. Croix PD had heard enough. The investigation department felt that sufficient evidence existed to charge both Feliciano Morales and Arturo Cruz. Still, they wanted a confession from Cruz, so they brought the prime suspect in once more. At the same time, officers executed a search warrant of Cruz's premises, hoping to find a pair of blue jeans with the legs missing.

However, the search came up empty and Cruz refused to confess. Although he now admitted knowledge of Cathy Gunther and the gang rape at Machuchal ballpark, Cruz denied killing Cathy Gunther. Nevertheless, on Tuesday, May 23rd, police officers arrested Arturo Cruz, charging him with murder.

At the detention hearing before Territorial Court Judge George S. Eltman, Detective Ramon Gonzalez testified that Arturo Cruz killed Cathy Gunther after the victim failed to get either drugs or the \$20 she claimed Cruz owed her from an earlier drug transaction. The government charged Cruz with first-degree murder, kidnapping, rape, and robbery. Judge Eltman set the bond at \$100,000 and remanded Cruz to custody when the defendant couldn't post the bond. Later that day, police arrested Feliciano Morales.

One week later, U.S. Magistrate Jeffrey Resnick released Cruz on a \$200,000 property bond, despite protestations from the prosecutor's office. In his written ruling, Resnick wrote:

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The release, secured by property owned by the defendant's relatives, carried the stipulations that Cruz:

- ◆ Maintain an 8:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. daily curfew.

- ◆ Report daily to the U.S. Probation Office and weekly to the U.S. Marshals Office.

- ◆ Remain on St. Croix unless given the court's permission to travel.

- ◆ Submit to random drug testing by probation officers.

- ◆ Avoid Estate Profit, an area known for drug transactions.

- ◆ Commit no other local or federal crimes.

On August 29th, the evidence started to build against Cruz when Morales waived his juvenile status and agreed to be tried as an adult on charges of being an accomplice in the beating death of Cathy Gunther. After Morales entered a not guilty plea, the court released him into his family's custody on an unspecified \$100,000 bond.

The noose tightened around Arturo Cruz's neck three months later. On December 8th, Feliciano Morales reversed his plea to guilty before U.S. District Judge Joseph McGlynn as an accessory after the fact to first-degree murder. Sergeant Lawrence Motta said Morales had helped Arturo Cruz leave the crime scene and cover up evidence of the crime. The court delayed sentencing Morales until the conclusion of Arturo Cruz's trial.

Months dragged into a year before Arturo Cruz went to court. In early June, the trial began with Assistant U.S. Attorney David L. Atkinson giving his opening remarks:

"This is a case that demonstrates how graphically or how totally the drug problem has permeated our community. It cuts through all segments of our community.

"Cathy Gunther was no saint. She did things that were very stupid. Murder victims frequently aren't saintly. Some are, but many aren't. It is not unusual that murder victims go into places that are sometimes dangerous. I am not

going to condone Cathy Gunther's drug use. I am not going to support it or tell you it was right. Of course it was wrong. And she paid for it with her life.

"But the point I want to make is that drug addict or not, drug user or not, nobody deserved to die the way Cathy Gunther died."

Prosecutor Atkinson called Cathy Gunther's murder a "message killing" intended to show the island's drug users how the drug dealers planned to collect from addicts who didn't pay their bills.

Defense Attorney Michael Joseph objected to Atkinson's tactic and claimed the prosecutor's statements cast his client in a disparaging light.

"I have the feeling I will tell the jury to disregard everything that was said here," U.S. District Judge Robert J. Mehri warned Atkinson. Unless the prosecutor could prove the island's drug dealers were "putting out a message"

*Although he said
he watched the
gang rape, the
suspect denied
participating
in it...*

with Cathy Gunther's death, the judge said, he would instruct the jury to ignore Atkinson's argument.

Defense Attorney Joseph, sensing the momentum swinging his way, moved in for the kill. He requested a mistrial and moved for a dismissal of all charges.

"I can't grant a mistrial at this point," the judge said, but warned, "The government is skating on very, very thin ice."

In his opening argument, Defense Attorney Joseph cast doubt on his client's guilt by introducing another suspect. Rafael Sanchez would testify, Joseph claimed, that his brother Julio returned home in the early morning hours of May 19th with bloody pants, pulled a gun, and threatened to kill him if he leaked his name to anyone regarding Cathy Gunther's murder. It was Julio Sanchez, the defense attorney contended, who had cheated Cathy Gunther out of \$20 in a drug transaction earlier on the eve-

ning of her death, not Arturo Cruz. And it was Julio Sanchez who killed Cathy Gunther, the lawyer said, not Arturo Cruz.

During Prosecutor Atkinson's case-in-chief, he called Police Officer Stephen Brown. Brown started to relate a March 30th incident in which he observed the defendant in a roadside drug transaction, but the defense attorney objected to this line of testimony. Fearing he would lose his case, Atkinson dismissed the witness, pending recall.

Thereafter, Prosecutor Atkinson relied heavily on Feliciano Morales' testimony. The teenager said that around one o'clock on the morning in question, Cathy Gunther pulled a knife and attacked Cruz. Morales then described the ensuing events the way he'd confessed them to police a year earlier.

When his turn came, Defense Attorney Joseph called Rafael Sanchez to the stand, but soon wished he hadn't. Counting this witness as his ace in the hole, Joseph asked him to tell the jury about a certain incident involving his brother on the morning of Cathy Gunther's murder. To the lawyer's chagrin, the witness said he had lied in his earlier statements to the defense attorney. This unexpected turn forced Defense Attorney Joseph to fall back on the defendant's own testimony to establish his innocence.

On the witness stand, Arturo Cruz admitted having an altercation with Cathy Gunther in the early morning hours of May 19th. Gunther had falsely accused him of taking \$20 from her earlier that night, Cruz said, adding he kept trying to explain that he had nothing to do with the \$20. She "rushed" him with a knife, he said, and he stepped back. But when she kept coming at him, Cruz defended himself by striking the victim with a partially full beer bottle, breaking it over her head and knocking her down.

Although he admitted to watching the gang rape at Machuchal ballpark, Cruz denied raping the victim. In fact, he said, he felt remorse for Cathy Gunther and even tried to save her by picking her up off the ground and placing her in the back of the truck, intending to drive her home to safety. Cruz felt sorry for her, he said, and wanted to prevent any further harm befalling her.

Cruz claimed Morales, the driver, wouldn't stop the truck, despite his yelling at him to do so. Instead, Morales, of his own volition, drove to the deserted area near the molasses tanks and had sex with the victim several times. Cruz claimed he tried to stop Morales, but the

teenager persisted. Then Cathy Gunther "invited" Cruz to have sex with her, but he declined, saying she looked and smelled too bad. Instead, he put on a condom, considered oral sex, but reconsidered.

At that point in the defendant's story, he claimed they were preparing to leave when Cathy Gunther pulled another knife from behind the truck's front seat and assaulted him. Reacting quickly, Cruz disarmed her and again prepared to leave. But when the victim attempted to get in the truck, Morales pushed her down. Then the two men drove off with Cathy Gunther very much alive, chasing them down the road and yelling as they sped away with her truck.

Cruz said they drove to Juan Torres' house in Estate Profit, held a brief conversation—of which the defendant forgot the details—and then he asked Morales to take him home. Cruz contended that Morales refused, driving instead to the east end along South Shore Road. Cruz denied going to the beach, washing in the surf, and cutting off his pant legs. He also denied supplying drugs to Cathy Gunther.

After Arturo Cruz completed his testimony, the prosecutor recalled Police Officer Stephen Brown. The policeman testified that he observed what appeared to be drug transactions alongside the road in Estate Profit on March 30th, approximately six weeks before Cathy Gunther's death. Brown saw the "exchanging of money and some objects being passed back and forth." With no backup, Brown left but returned shortly with backup and approached the defendant. Cruz, Officer Brown said, saw him coming and threw a matchbox onto the ground. Upon retrieving the matchbox, the policeman found 14 bags of a white substance, which later tested to be cocaine. Officer Brown arrested Cruz on the spot.

Next, the Assistant U.S. Attorney called the relative of Cathy Gunther's who had vacationed on St. Croix with the victim from March 23rd to May 13th—a seven-week period ending six days prior to Cathy Gunther's death and overlapping Officer Brown's arrest of Arturo Cruz. The victim's relative related that she drove with Cathy to Estate Profit several times during her vacation. On four or five occasions, while the two sat in the victim's red pickup truck, she observed Cathy obtaining drugs alongside the road in Estate Profit from a man she identified in court as the defendant, Arturo Cruz. Once, she added, Cruz took money from Cathy but never

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returned with the drugs. The relative closed her testimony by mentioning the victim's recent phone calls to her describing her fears over an unpaid drug debt.

On June 3, 1990, a jury of seven men and five women found Arturo Cruz guilty of first-degree murder, murder in the act of rape, kidnapping with intent to rape, second-degree robbery, a lesser-included offense of first-degree robbery, and unauthorized use of a vehicle. The jury found him innocent of the charge of aggravated rape. Sentencing was delayed for three months.

On September 11, 1990, with Defense Attorney Michael Joseph filing a motion for a new trial, Arturo Cruz stood before Judge Mehri, silent, his head bowed, shifting his weight from one foot to the other. The judge said nothing would "assuage the agony" of the victim's family and his "heart also went out to the defendant's family," but

justice was served by sentencing Arturo Cruz to life in prison with no chance for parole.

Defense Attorney Joseph withdrew his earlier motion, but said two years remained to request a new trial based on new evidence, adding, "This is one of the most confusing cases I've ever had."

A day later, Feliciano "Felito" Morales, now 17, wore black pants and a maroon shirt as he stood before Judge Mehri.

"You will suffer for this for the rest of your life," the judge said. "It was a terrible, terrible thing you did to that woman...[and] to society."

Feliciano Morales told the judge he felt sorry for his actions moments before the judge rapped the gavel on the bench and sentenced Morales to 10 years in prison as an accessory after the fact in the first-degree murder of Cathy Gunther.

Morales' attorney, Harold Willocks, called his client a victim of his environment. Estate Profit, the attorney said, was a crime-ridden community that "reeks of violence and drugs. He's not a leader, but a follower. On that day, he was no more than a follower."

Because Morales cooperated with the prosecution in the murder investigation, the judge feared reprisal against Morales if he were jailed in local prisons.

"It is impossible for you to stay on this island with any degree of safety," Judge Mehri said. "We don't need any more trouble on this island." ♦♦♦

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Johnny Bottoms, "Peppy," Juan Torres, and Rafael and Julio Sanchez are not the real names of the persons so named in the foregoing story. Fictitious names have been used because there is no reason for public interest in the identities of these persons.

Pedophile Trolled

from page 36

Unfortunately, as frantic relatives waited day and night by the telephone for any information about the youngster's whereabouts, no trace of Lee Iseli was found Sunday night. Because temperatures were only a few degrees above freezing, there was added concern about the possibility of the boy having to spend the night outdoors and suffering from exposure.

The next day, police brought in additional dogs, this time Mountain Wilderness Search Dogs, to go through the neighborhoods in another attempt to pick up the boy's scent. The searchers took the dogs through rugged areas in the parks, as well as into garages and abandoned buildings—anywhere they thought the boy could hide. By day's end, though, no traces of the boy or his scent had been found.

As fears of a kidnapping grew, police asked residents to search their garages, basements, parked boats, trailers, and cars, anywhere a small child might hide, in a last-ditch effort to find the boy. Despite everyone's noble attempts, however, there still was no sign of Lee Iseli.

As police reluctantly began to scale back their search, they began to publicly express their fears that Lee may have

been taken by a kidnapper.

"There doesn't seem to be any other explanation," said Sergeant Terry Gray. "You can wrack your brain, but you can't think of what a four-year-old boy would be doing all this time. I can't think of any other possible excuse. If he was staying overnight with a friend somewhere, I'm sure the parents would have called by now. They must know he's missing."

It was Halloween, and even though it's usually a happy holiday for children, there was little joy in Lee Iseli's neighborhood. The spirit of the night was markedly dampened as more parents than usual accompanied their children from house to house, obviously a result of their fears for their own children's safety.

Lee's Ghostbuster costume went unused, and his friends were very much aware of his absence. Many children said they missed him. Some cried openly because of the uncertainty of what had become of the boy.

One of Lee's relatives theorized that perhaps a lonely adult had abducted Lee and was taking care of him. The relative made a public plea to anyone holding the boy to release him.

"There are a lot of people out there who are lonely," said the relative. "Maybe [it's] someone who never had a child or who never got to dress up on Halloween or never got presents at Christmas. If it's someone like that, he could just drop [Lee] off at a store or street corner." Sadly, the family mem-

ber's plea went unheeded.

Early the next morning in Vancouver, Washington, a pheasant hunter parked his car near the boat ramp to Vancouver Lake's south shore and unloaded his gun and small backpack. It was a few minutes shy of 8:00 a.m. when the hunter began beating the brush for his quarry in the Washington State Game Department area just off La Frambois Road. The area, open 24 hours a day, is heavily used by hunters and fishermen and is covered by wild grass, brush, and a few trees. It is an area isolated from the city and residential areas.

The Washington State Department of Wildlife stocks the area twice weekly with pheasant during hunting season, and hunting is allowed to begin after 8:00 a.m. Half an hour later, however, the hunter decided to return to his car. He had walked only a few yards on the return trip when he noticed the lily-white object in the brush just ahead of him. Curious, he walked toward it only to stop dead in his tracks after a few feet. To his horror and surprise, the hunter could see that the object was a naked little boy who was obviously dead.

The hunter ran back to his car and drove quickly to the nearest telephone. Although nearly incoherent from distress, the man managed to report his grim discovery to a dispatcher at the Clark County Sheriff's Department.

Minutes later, Clark County Sheriff Frank Kanekoa and Undersheriff Robert Songer arrived at the remote site, lo-

cated at the end of a two-mile-long dead-end road, where they met the hunter.

"When I got there, there were probably twenty-five people waiting to hunt," the hunter told the lawmen. "At eight a.m., we all started walking through the fields." He explained that he and his partners split up at one point, and when he was through hunting he began walking back toward his car.

"I was coming back to the parking lot," he continued. "And there it was. I was shocked...that someone would...put a little dead boy out there. It's the worst thing I've seen in my life."

The distraught hunter led Sheriffs Kanekoa and Songer to the boy's body, which lay face up in the brush about 50 yards from the boat ramp and 50 feet from the edge of a gravel parking lot. It was obvious to the seasoned lawmen that no attempt had been made to conceal the body. There was no clothing on or near the cold corpse.

The probers noted the telltale signs of strangulation, but they found nothing at the scene that could have been used to strangle the boy. Aware of Lee Iseli's disappearance, Sheriffs Kanekoa and Songer strongly suspected that the child

had now been found. The young victim matched the physical description of the Iseli boy. They called in forensic experts and notified the Portland Police Bureau of the discovery. As a result, all available Portland and Clark county homicide detectives were put on the case.

Clark County sheriff's deputies cordoned off the area. Officials declined to discuss the case with the news media until they knew more about what they were dealing with.

"We're playing this one very close to the vest," said Sheriff Kanekoa. "Obviously, you don't find a four- or five-year-old male child out in the brush every day. We're treating this case as a homicide."

Before noon, the search for Lee Iseli was officially over. Through his fingerprints, forensic experts positively identified the body of the nude boy found at Vancouver Lake as that of the missing Portland boy. Lee Iseli had been fingerprinted a few months earlier at a children's fair in Portland, and a set of those prints were used to make the identification. A Portland police chaplain was subsequently sent to the Iseli home to break the bad news and to be with the boy's family in their time of need.

An autopsy conducted later that day confirmed that Lee had died as a result of strangulation, but did not conclusively determine how long he had been dead. Authorities declined to say whether or not the boy had been sexually assaulted.

As a panicked community began to talk and rumors began to circulate, authorities initially attempted to play down any possible connection between Lee Iseli's murder and the stabbing deaths of the Neer brothers two months earlier. Detectives said the killer's method of operation was different in the Iseli case, particularly in that Lee had been strangled and the Neer brothers had been stabbed repeatedly. Arch Hamilton, the Clark County coroner, bolstered that opinion by stating that there were "absolutely no similarities at this point" in the two cases.

Detective David Simpson of the Portland Police Bureau, however, took a more cautious approach. He said this was the first case of this type in the area that he could recall. "I'd like to say it's an isolated incident, but I don't say it reassuringly," said Simpson. "We don't know enough yet about what happened. But I think we as a community need to

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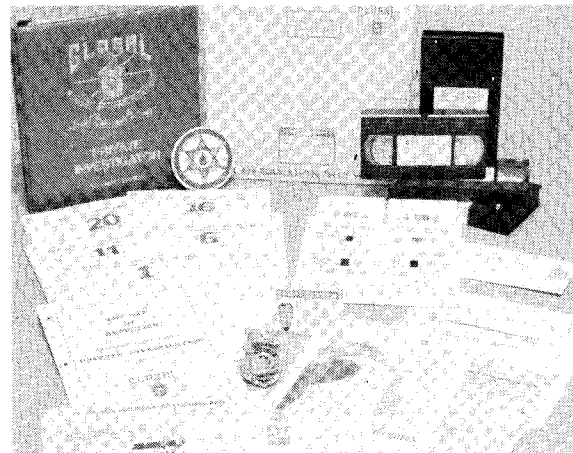


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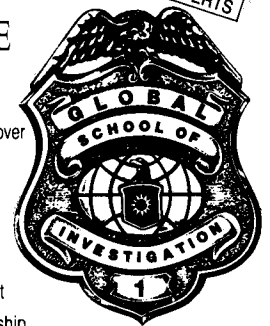
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be extremely cautious until we get more answers.”

Meanwhile, Clark County investigators conducted an inch-by-inch search of the area where Lee Iseli's body was found. Anything that wasn't a part of the natural setting, items such as trash, cigarette butts, clothing, and rope, was marked on grid maps and collected as evidence. Although they remained tight-lipped about what evidence, if any, was recovered, lawmen did admit that they had no suspects.

“We're up to our elbows in alligators trying to get this case to make some sense,” said Undersheriff Songer. “Just that a four-year-old child was murdered doesn't make sense to begin with. What could a four-year-old do to make someone kill them?”

Meanwhile, a psychologist who specialized in sexual abuse and homicide cases provided police investigators with a profile of Lee Iseli's killer. The psychologist, Don Adamski of Portland, told probers that the killer was probably a middle-class or blue-collar working man who often fantasized about killing a child. Adamski said the killer was probably living a normal lifestyle but harboring a tremendous amount of hostility.

“The killer has been having thoughts like this for a long period of time,” said Adamski. “I would assume that he has fantasized about this type of behavior.

“The other possibility,” continued Adamski, “is that this could be a drug-crazed individual, but I think that that would be pretty unusual. The person probably leads a passive life and finally had to act this out.”

“It's hard to say or even look at someone and say, ‘This is a child killer,’ ” said Clark County Sheriff Frank Kanekoa. “I have a hard time handling a case where a child of any age is murdered in this fashion. I can't fathom the thinking of someone who would hurt a child who can't do anyone any harm. It's too early in the case to say. We need to gather more evidence before we come out with a profile.”

Kanekoa stressed that the primary piece of evidence being sought was Lee Iseli's clothing. He said the clothes were not found at the crime scene.

In the meantime, Portland detectives questioned the subject of a composite drawing, the man who was seen talking to Lee Iseli at the Richmond School playground. The location of the man gave sleuths the first thread of hope that they were on the right track. However, the subject had been accompanied by

another person who stated that they hadn't left with Lee Iseli. After additional questioning, investigators were convinced that the man was not a suspect in Lee's disappearance and murder.

Despite a telephone hotline and a \$10,000 reward fund, a child killer continued to walk the community's streets while frustrated detectives quickly ran out of leads.

BARELY TWO weeks later, on Monday, November 15th, a 6-year-old boy went with his family and friends to see *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids!* at the New Liberty Theater in downtown Camas, Washington, about 15 miles east of Vancouver. At 7:45 p.m. the boy, Tommy Staley, told his mother that he had to go to the bathroom. After sliding through a row of crowded seats, Tommy walked briskly up the aisle, passed through the double doors that led to the lobby, and

The man seemed friendly, but to the boy's horror, the man punched him—hard—in the stomach...

entered the restroom. He passed a young, harmless-looking, dark-haired man in the foyer that separates the restroom from the lobby.

Tommy had finished his business and was alone in the restroom, preparing to wash his hands, when the dark-haired man approached him in a friendly manner. To Tommy's horror and surprise, however, the man punched him hard in the stomach. When Tommy doubled over in pain, the man hoisted him up and over his left shoulder. Thinking he'd knocked the air out of the boy, the man carried Tommy out of the bathroom and through the lobby. As he approached the front doors leading outside, Tommy began kicking wildly and screaming as loud as he could.

“Help me!” yelled the boy. “Somebody, please help me! I don't know him!”

“Calm down, son, calm down,” said the man, as he walked in a normal man-

ner through the doors to the outside. But Tommy continued to scream.

Theater employees didn't like what they were seeing. Although the man appeared unruffled, the altercation smelled of an abduction. As a result, one of the employees quietly dialed 911 as two other employees followed the man and boy into the street.

Across the street from the theater, Les Wilson was opening the door to his pickup truck when he spotted the man carrying the boy out of the building. The man carried the still-screaming boy around the corner and approached an older, yellow Pinto station wagon. As he reached into his pocket for keys, the abductor put the boy down.

Sensing his chance to make a break for it, Tommy Staley bolted and began running back toward the theater. Crying, he met the theater employees and, recognizing safety, he embraced one of them.

By this time Pete Mann, a friend of Tommy's family, had heard some of the commotion and began to wonder what was keeping the child so long in the bathroom. After conferring with Tommy's relative, Pete went to look for the boy. When he reached the lobby, he noticed all the turmoil and saw the theater employees walking back inside with Tommy. After telling him what had happened, Pete Mann ran outside in pursuit of Tommy's abductor.

He looked up and down the street, but the only person he saw was Les Wilson, who had witnessed the kidnapper drive away in the yellow Pinto. After giving Mann a description of the suspect and his car, Wilson told Mann that the suspect had gone north on Birch Street and had vanished. Pete Mann jumped into his own older-model car and went after him.

Mann soon found the Pinto. By some great twist of fate, the car was stalled at Northwest Sixth Avenue and Adams Street, not far from the entrance to Highway 14 that leads back to Vancouver. The car's driver was cranking it over, trying to get it started again. Mann parked his car in the parking lot of a nearby paper mill, then walked over to the yellow Pinto. He approached it cautiously and asked the driver if he needed some help.

“Looks like you're having car troubles here,” said Mann, speaking to the unsuspecting abductor through the side window. “Doesn't look so good.” Mann explained that he could probably fix the car, but suggested that they first get the vehicle into the paper mill's parking lot.

Along the way, as they were pushing the car, Mann continued to ask "innocent" questions until he was satisfied that the Pinto's driver was the one who had abducted the boy inside the theater.

After moving the car, the driver opened the hood and stood looking at the engine with his back to Mann. That's when Mann, a burly construction worker, made his move. He wrapped his right arm around the abductor's neck in a tight choke hold and seized the suspect's left wrist with his left hand.

"This is it, you sonofabitch!" said Mann. "You've been restrained. We're going to get the cops." Mann then marched the suspect several blocks back to the theater where he pinned him against a wall while waiting for the police to arrive.

When officers from the Camas Police Department arrived, they took a statement from each of those people who were concerned about what had occurred. The only person not talking was the suspect, who sat quietly on the floor in the theater lobby. After getting enough preliminary information, the officers took the man into custody.

During questioning at the police station, officers identified the suspect as Westley Allan Dodd, 28, of Vancouver. At first, Dodd didn't provide much information: just his name, address, and the fact that he was at the theater to watch the movie. However, responding to further questions, Dodd told the officers that he worked at a paper factory on Fruit Valley Road in Vancouver. They noted that the work address Dodd gave them was near La Frambois Road, not far from the site where little Lee Iseli's nude body was found. Moreover, his home address was less than a mile from David Douglas Park!

It was at that point that Westley Dodd became a suspect in the murders of the Neer brothers and Lee Iseli. Although he was advised of his rights, Dodd continued to talk. To everyone's astonishment, Dodd confessed to all three murders and provided information to the officers that had been withheld deliberately from the public. Dodd was promptly turned over to the Clark County Sheriff's Department.

Despite a list of 50 possible suspects—all of whom were known sex offenders—that was developed with the cooperation of all police agencies involved, investigators admitted that they were fast running out of clues. The Camas arrest had been a lucky break indeed, a "fluke" according to one police

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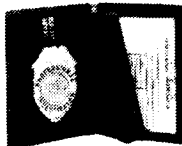
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official, particularly since Dodd's name was not on their list of possible suspects.

After being transferred to the Clark County Jail, Dodd was interviewed by Detective David L. Trimble, a homicide investigator for the sheriff's department. In a bombshell statement, Westley Dodd explained how he had killed William and Cole Neer on Labor Day. He also told, in graphic detail, how he'd abducted, killed, and had postmortem sex with 4-year-old Lee Iseli.

Dodd explained that he'd moved to Vancouver from Seattle during the summer and had lived with relatives until he had saved enough money to rent his own place. Two days after moving into a duplex apartment near David Douglas Park, Dodd said he began trolling for victims.

"I was getting bored—I didn't have a television," said Dodd during taped interviews with Detective Trimble and several Portland police detectives. He said he drove to David Douglas Park because he thought "it might be a place where I could find a boy and get it going."

He described how he discovered the Neer brothers along the dirt bike paths on the western edge of the park. He said he ordered the boys to go with him, but William asked why they should. Dodd told the detectives that he responded, "Because I told you to."

Dodd said that he tied the boys' hands with shoelaces, after which he ordered Cole Neer to pull down his pants. When Cole complied, Dodd said he performed oral sex on the boy in the presence of Cole's brother. When he was finished, he ordered William to do the same thing, but the boy began crying so hard that he was unable to comply. Dodd said he attempted to perform fellatio on William anyway, but was unable to do so.

When he was finished, Dodd told the children, "Okay, there's one more thing." He then raised his pant leg up and revealed a six-inch fish fillet knife. Dodd said that the boys, sensing they were in imminent danger, cried even harder and begged him, "Please don't kill us, mister!"

"I pulled the knife out from under my pant leg," Dodd told the detectives. "Billy was off to my right, about a foot off of me diagonally. Cole was off on my left. And I reached over and stabbed Billy with the knife. Then I turned to Cole and stabbed him two or three times, and while I was stabbing Cole, Billy got up and started to run down the

hill back to the trail. Just—just started running up the trail towards Andresen and I ran after him. I didn't wait to see if Cole was dead or anything...I wanted to get Billy before he got to the road. I caught him and grabbed him by his—his right arm, stopped, spun him around. Then Billy said, 'I'm sorry.' " Dodd said he stabbed Billy again.

At that point, Billy began running again, but Dodd did not chase after him. Dodd explained that he was more concerned with returning to Cole's body to make certain that he hadn't left behind any incriminating evidence. As Dodd reached his car to head back to his apartment, he said he could hear sirens and presumed that Billy Neer had already been found.

A short time after murdering the Neer brothers, Dodd said he began thinking and planning his next attack. He said he used a map of Portland and marked off several parks where he thought he could find children playing alone. The day before he abducted Lee Iseli, Dodd said he went to several of the parks where he contemplated abducting and killing 15 to 20 children. His plans had been unsuccessful, however, and he began driving toward home.

He became lost along the way and happened to drive by Richmond School. Although there were children there, none were playing alone, so he left in an agitated state, frustrated and disappointed. But he returned the following day, Dodd said, and found Lee Iseli playing by himself near the volcano.

"I went up to the little boy and said, 'Hi! How you doing?' " Dodd told the detectives. "I asked him if he wanted to make some money and play some games. He was a little hesitant, but I reached out my hand and he took it." Dodd said he told Lee that his dad had sent him to pick him up, and they drove off together in Dodd's Pinto.

After driving a few blocks, Dodd said Lee began protesting that he didn't live in the direction they were heading.

"I said, 'Well, we're going to my house.' " Dodd said the child began crying a few times on the way to Vancouver, but he was able to calm him down.

"When we got there [to Dodd's apartment], I told him he had to be real quiet because my neighbor lady didn't like kids," Dodd continued. Once inside, Dodd ordered the boy to remove all his clothing. Dodd said he spent the next several hours molesting Lee and taking Polaroid pictures of him.

"I asked him if he'd like to stay the

night and he said no, that his brother would probably miss him. And I said, 'Nah. Your brother is probably having fun, too.' "

Dodd said he told Lee that he was sorry he didn't have any toys for him to play with. He then promised to take Lee to a nearby K-Mart store and buy him a He-Man toy and to McDonald's for dinner if he'd agree to stay. Dodd said the child eventually agreed.

Dodd said he molested the little boy throughout the night and at one point told the child he was going to kill him the next morning. When the boy became frightened and began to cry, Dodd said he tried to reassure Lee by telling him that he wouldn't kill him. Dodd then graphically described how he killed Lee Iseli at 5:30 on the morning of October 30th, before he left for work.

"So I took a piece of rope and wrapped it around his neck and I pulled it tight," said Dodd, in a chilling, frighteningly matter-of-fact tone. "I figured I'd probably been trying to choke him for two minutes or so already, and I didn't know how much longer it was going to take, so using the rope, I carried him over to the closet and tied the end of the rope up around the clothes rack in the closet and left him hanging there. Then I took a picture of it."

Because he didn't want to "hurt the boy...cause him any pain," Dodd said he waited until after the child was dead before engaging in anal intercourse.

What did he do with the corpse when he went to work? Did he dump it at the La Frambois Road location where it was found? The detectives didn't have to press Dodd very hard for answers.

Dodd calmly explained that he placed the boy's corpse on a shelf in the closet and concealed it by placing pillows and other items in front of it "just in case the landlady decided to come in and have a look around."

When he returned home that evening, Dodd wrapped the boy's body in a plastic garbage bag and took it to the location where it was found, near Vancouver Lake. He said he then burned the child's clothing in a barrel outside his apartment, but retained the boy's underpants. Police knew that the underpants served as a "trophy" of his kill.

Armed with search warrants, homicide probers converged on Westley Dodd's duplex apartment in the 9800 block of Northeast Third Street in Vancouver. During the lengthy search, investigators found a briefcase that contained photographs in a pink 4-by-6-inch album. Many of the photos showed

Dodd engaging in deviant sexual acts with Lee Iseli before and after the boy's death. One of the pictures depicted the boy hanging from a rope inside the closet.

Sleuths also seized a pair of boy's underpants, a diary, plastic garbage bags, a Polaroid camera, a roll of undeveloped but exposed 35mm film, several volumes of "Parent-Child" books, sections of Dodd's bed frame with pieces of rope attached, and numerous newspaper clippings about the murders of the Neer brothers and Lee Iseli. They also took a copy of the New Testament, still in its original box.

As a matter of routine, investigators took a number of vacuum sweepings from Dodd's apartment in their search for hair and fiber evidence. They also seized bedding, as well as the ashes from the burn barrel outside his apartment.

A short time later, Westley Dodd was charged with three counts of aggravated first-degree murder in connection with the deaths of the three boys. Prosecutor Art Curtis said he would seek the death penalty and would try the case in two separate trials. One trial would be for the death of Lee Iseli, the other for the deaths of William and Cole Neer. That way, explained Curtis, he would have two shots at getting the death penalty for Dodd.

Dodd was also charged with one count each of first-degree attempted kidnapping and first-degree attempted murder in the Camas theater case involving Tommy Staley. Despite his confession to police, Dodd pleaded "not guilty" to all of the charges. Vancouver attorney Lee Dane was appointed to represent him.

When the detectives fanned out in Dodd's neighborhood in their attempt to build a stronger, more solid case against their suspect, they found a neighbor who told them she recalled observing Dodd arrive home with a small blond boy about the time Lee Iseli disappeared.

"I thought nothing of it at the time," said the neighbor. She said the boy was no more than five or six years old and was wearing a lightweight jacket. "My feelings are asking me now if this was the little Iseli child...I don't even want to think about it," she said.

Dodd's landlord told detectives that Dodd was "real nice, real helpful" to her. She said she didn't know much about him and did not notice anything suspicious about his activities. "He paid his rent on time," she said. She also told

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the investigators that she discussed the Neer murders with Dodd right after the two brothers were killed. "He told me he hoped they caught the man who did it. He seemed concerned about it."

When the detectives began checking out Westley Dodd's background, they were told by the owner of the paper company where Dodd worked as a shipping clerk that the murder suspect was a model employee. He was very conscientious about his work and never missed a day since he started there.

"He was the last person you'd suspect," said one company official. "There was total shock" at the plant when employees were told of Dodd's arrest. "It was absolutely devastating. If you had a man who didn't miss a day of work, was willing to work weekends, was very sharp, articulate, and diligent, what would you think? The supervisors here were looking for ways to promote him."

Westley Dodd had an ominous past, detectives soon learned, and had somehow managed to slip between the cracks in the system that was supposed to protect decent citizens from such predatory animals. Dodd, it seemed, had left a long trail of sex offenses, all involving children, and was no stranger to law enforcement in the state of Washington.

Born in Toppenish, Washington, on July 3, 1961, Dodd's family had moved to Kennewick when he was 3 years old. The rest of his life was marked by frequent family moves and the eventual divorce of his parents. Although Dodd was bright and had an avid interest in music, he held mostly low-paying jobs throughout his life.

By the time Dodd reached age 12, he began to develop a sexual attraction toward young boys. By age 16, he began seeking frequent sexual contact with children, mostly boys. Police talked to him on a few occasions, but there was never enough evidence to bring forth formal charges. At law enforcement's prodding, Dodd began voluntary counseling but quickly dropped out of a program for young sex offenders.

Dodd graduated from Columbia High School in Richland, Washington, in 1979 with a 3.0 grade point average, after which he worked as a stock boy for a local grocery store. The following year he was arrested for soliciting sex from a minor, but the case was dismissed.

Looking for a change, Dodd enlisted in the U.S. Navy during the summer of 1981. He was sent to Groton, Connecticut, where he was trained for submarine duty. After training, he was stationed at

the Bangor Naval Station in Bangor, Washington, where he began spending a lot of his free time at local arcades propositioning 7- to 10-year-old boys.

In June 1982, Dodd went AWOL and attempted to solicit a sexual act from a 9-year-old boy at a Richland playground. In August of that same year, the Navy found and arrested Dodd at Camp Burton, a music camp in King County near Seattle, on charges of child molestation stemming from the June incident. He received a less than honorable discharge from the Navy.

A few months later, in December, Dodd lured a young Benton City, Washington, boy from a playground and convinced the child to undress. He was arrested and pleaded guilty the following month. He was ordered to participate in a counseling program.

Failing to meet the conditions of his court-ordered counseling, Dodd served

*Dodd drew a rack
he could use to
do experimental
surgery on boys
while they were
still alive.*

23 days in jail. After his release, he moved to Lewiston, Idaho, where he engaged in sexual acts with a 9-year-old boy on at least two occasions. Nearly a year later, the boy's parents reported the incidents to police and Dodd was convicted of lewd conduct with a minor. He was sentenced to 10 years in jail. Although he served time in the Nez Perce County Jail, Dodd's sentence was reduced to time served. He was released after he agreed to attend an outpatient program for sex offenders under the jurisdiction of the state of Idaho.

In 1986, Dodd moved back to Richland, Washington, where he sexually abused a 4-year-old neighbor boy over a period of five months. Again, Dodd escaped receiving any significant punishment for his deviant actions.

By the fall of 1986, Dodd was living and working as a truck driver in Seattle. In June of the following year, he attempted to lure a young boy into a va-

cant building. Luckily, the boy escaped, but Dodd was arrested and convicted of attempted unlawful imprisonment, a misdemeanor. He was incarcerated until October, at which time he was put on probation and ordered to undergo treatment again.

When his probation expired in the fall of 1988, Dodd quit the treatment program despite objections from officials who said he was far from being cured. Dodd was employed for the next several months at a gas station/store, a job he had held while on probation, where he was trusted and well liked by his co-workers who, of course, knew nothing about his child molestations.

Alone and strapped for money, Dodd moved in with relatives in Vancouver in late July 1989. On September 1st, he moved into his own apartment. Within days, children began turning up murdered.

During a jailhouse interview with this writer following his arrest, Westley Dodd confessed that he would have killed the Seattle boy had the boy not escaped. He explained that this had been the first incident in which he had formed the intention to carry out a murder. Unfortunately, it had not been his last....

ON MONDAY, JUNE 11, 1990, Dodd appeared in Clark County Superior Court for a hearing before Judge Robert Harris. In a move that took authorities by surprise, Dodd, against the vigorous objections of his attorney, announced that he wanted to change his pleas from not guilty to guilty. In low monotones, Westley Dodd confessed his crimes in court.

"On September 4, 1989, I went to David Douglas Park with the premeditated intent to cause the death of a human being," said Dodd, reading from a prepared statement. "I met Cole Neer. I raped Cole Neer, and then I killed him. I also at about the same time murdered William Neer."

He told the judge that he took a knife with him to the park with the intent of raping and murdering a child. He said he committed the murders to conceal his identity from the police. Dodd said that after killing the Neer brothers, he felt a sense of fear but soon overcame it.

"I was nervous. I was kind of afraid that I was going to get caught. And then as I watched the papers I realized that the police didn't have any clues. I started feeling a little bit more confident and realized I could do it and get away with it. The next step would be to actually kidnap a boy.

"On October 29, 1989, I kidnapped Lee Iseli from Portland and drove him to my apartment in Vancouver. I raped him, and on the morning of October 30th, I murdered Lee Iseli."

Judge Harris asked Dodd if the killing had occurred on the spur of the moment, on a whim.

"No, sir," Dodd responded. "It was premeditated."

Dodd also admitted that when he attempted to kidnap Tommy Staley from the Camas theater, it was his intention to rape and then murder the boy.

Although Dodd's admission of guilt made it unnecessary for the state to continue with a trial for a guilt or innocence determination, it was still necessary to empanel a jury to decide whether Dodd should be sentenced to death or life in prison. By pleading guilty, Dodd had relinquished the right to appeal many of the legal issues of the case, including whether the warrants used to search his apartment and car were legal and whether the confessions he made to police were valid.

The following month, after a jury of six men and six women were seated, Chief Deputy Prosecutor Roger Bennett began presenting the case. He took the

jurors step by step through the case, from the heinous killings to Dodd's confessions to the defendant's lurid past. He showed them grisly photographs of the victims and a 20-minute video made by police of the scene when Lee Iseli's body was found.

But perhaps the most chilling part of the proceedings was that focusing on Westley Dodd's diary, which detailed the killings, his future plans to kill children, and a pact he made with Satan, which he described as a "Love God," to help him achieve his murderous goals. Prosecutor Bennett explained that Dodd's handwritten diary showed that he "planned to engage in a large number of long-term kidnappings and murders of young children."

Bennett said Dodd's writings showed a desire to "torture children before he killed them." The prosecutor produced schematic drawings from Dodd's diary that depicted a rack which he could use to tie up and immobilize his victims so that he could perform "experimental surgery" and dismember the children while they were still alive. His plans were to surgically remove parts of their sex organs while the children were conscious.

Dodd's diary told of numerous ways in which he could murder children. Some he planned to strangle, others he intended to suffocate. Still others would be drowned or poisoned. He referred to the planned deaths as his "experiments."

Prosecutor Bennett showed the jurors a map of David Douglas Park, drawn by Dodd, and an entry in his diary that said the park would be a "good place for rape and murder, or kidnap, rape and murder...a good hunting ground." Dodd also wrote in his diary that he "got more of a high out of the killing than the molesting."

"Cole and William Neer died in David Douglas Park on Labor Day as victims of 'the hunt,'" said Prosecutor Art Curtis, his voice often cracking with emotion. "At least twenty other children avoided death through fate that weekend alone. Do you wonder where those children are? Who are the lucky ones?"

"Lee Iseli met a friend at the playground, a nice man who wanted to buy him a toy, wanted to give him some money," continued Curtis. "Lee Iseli did what we teach our children not to do....Little did he know as he played

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happily at Mr. Dodd's apartment the night before his death that Mr. Dodd was sitting, writing in his diary."

Prosecutor Curtis then read a passage from the diary: "6:30 p.m. Lee is still playing. Will probably wait until morning to kill him. He suspects nothing now. That way his body will still be fairly fresh for experiments after work."

Arguing against leniency for Dodd, Curtis told jurors there was no evidence for them to consider that warranted leniency.

"Must I remind you of the crimes?" he asked. "How do you describe the enormity of the crimes for which the defendant has pled guilty—what is the appropriate word? Outrageous? Appalling? Beyond belief? Horrific? It is difficult to believe a human being is capable of fantasizing about such crimes."

"Look at what Mr. Dodd likes to do in his free time," co-prosecutor Roger Bennett told the jurors, reminding the panel that Dodd's one hobby and passion was killing. "Plan child murders. Commit child murders. Relive fantasies about child murders and write about

them. With life without parole, two of those things are still available to him." Bennett then urged the jury to sentence Westley Dodd to death.

Dodd's attorney, Lee Dane, argued that Dodd should be sentenced to life without parole. Dane said Dodd would not pose a future threat to society because he killed only children, and none would be available to him if he was sentenced to life in prison.

"I'd like you to think about the effect of an execution on a community—whether it heals or hurts a community," said Dane. "The death penalty has never brought back a human life, has never elevated a community or the people who comprise it."

On Saturday, July 15, 1990, following 14 hours of grueling deliberations over three days, the jury concluded that Westley Allan Dodd must die for his crimes. They failed to find any reason for leniency.

Dodd subsequently asked that his death sentence be carried out expeditiously. Authorities are making every effort to grant his request and are confident that Dodd may be executed in as

little as two years if he doesn't file any appeals. So far he hasn't. Dodd has written to the Washington State Supreme Court from his cell on death row at the state penitentiary in Walla Walla, requesting that they quickly conclude the one mandatory appeal afforded all death penalty cases, urging the justices to uphold his conviction and sentence. Dodd has said that he will choose hanging over lethal injection when the time comes.

In the meantime, Westley Dodd reportedly lies in his prison cell and masturbates night and day as he wanders in and out of fantasy states, apparently reliving the gruesome murders he committed as well as those he had planned to commit. ♦♦♦

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Dave Miller, Don Adamski, Tommy Staley, Pete Mann, and Les Wilson are not the real names of the persons so named in the foregoing story. Fictitious names have been used because there is no reason for public interest in the identities of these persons.



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Kinky Swingers

from page 46

As their investigation continued, Detectives Turner and Estes, with the assistance of the FBI, subpoenaed telephone and other records of several Antigo residents who knew the Bockornys. The sleuths learned that the couple had ongoing contact with several friends and relatives in Wisconsin after they had fled Oregon. Turner and Estes cautioned Wisconsin authorities that the murder suspects could be in Green Bay. As a result, an APB was issued in Wisconsin for the Bockornys and their van.

A few days later, on Thursday, October 26th, a Green Bay police officer spotted a van that fit the description of the Bockornys'. The vehicle was parked in a motel parking lot on the west side of town. When the officer checked the license plate, he found that it was indeed registered to Randy Bockorny.

The officer called for backups and, when help arrived, the lawmen maintained a low profile as they checked out the motel. When they spoke with a desk clerk, they learned that a couple had registered there on October 15th under the name Debra Bockorny.

The desk clerk proved helpful. She told probers that Debra Bockorny was "very friendly," and that she had obtained a job as a waitress at the motel restaurant. She said that Debra's husband apparently worked elsewhere. However, as luck would have it, the desk clerk told police that the couple happened to be in the restaurant as they spoke.

Using extreme caution, police surrounded the restaurant. When everyone was in place, an officer went inside to make sure the suspects were there. After identifying their subjects, several officers entered the restaurant and arrested Randy and Debra Bockorny without incident. They were held without bail in the Brown County Jail on the Oregon murder warrants, and their Ford van was towed to a Green Bay police garage.

Upon learning of the arrests, Captain H. Patrick Detloff, chief of detectives for the Clackamas County Sheriff's Department, promptly sent Detectives Turner and Estes to Green Bay to interview the murder suspects. Randy Bockorny had little to say to the detec-

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tives and invoked his rights. Debra, however, talked with the sleuths. Both suspects initially refused to waive extradition to Oregon.

Following their interviews with Debra Bockorny, Detectives Turner and Estes had every reason to believe that the Bockornys had killed Deborah Sue Spicer after they attempted to force her to engage in a lesbian sexual act with Debra Bockorny while Randy watched them.

When they searched the Bockornys' van, Turner and Estes found, among other things, the large section of carpet that had been cut away from the bedroom of the couple's Gresham rental home. Moreover, the interior of the van smelled awful, and when they saw the massive bloodstains on the carpet, Turner and Estes knew why. When they turned the carpet over, they observed that blood had soaked it through and through. Was it Deborah Spicer's blood? they wondered.

Results of blood typing procedures by the Oregon State Police Crime Lab

indicated that bloodstains found at the Bockornys' house in Gresham was of the same type of Spicer's, and that blood found inside the Bockornys' van was also of the same type as the victim. While such evidence is not conclusive in and of itself, it can be most helpful in building a case against a murder suspect, particularly when it is combined with other physical evidence.

Some three weeks later, Debra Bockorny decided to waive extradition and return to Oregon to face murder charges. Her husband, however, continued to fight extradition. It took another two weeks and a governor's warrant to return Randy Bockorny to Oregon.

Once they were back in the Beaver State, Randy and Debra Bockorny were held without bail in the downtown Portland Justice Center Jail. Each was subsequently indicted by a grand jury and charged with two counts of aggravated murder and one count of murder. The two aggravated murder counts alleged that Deborah Spicer was killed during the commission of attempted first-de-

gree sexual abuse and that she was killed in an attempt to conceal that crime. The single count of murder alleged that the Bockornys had intentionally caused Spicer's death by beating, asphyxiation, and stabbing. Each suspect pleaded not guilty and, because of the nature of the evidence and defense raised by Debra Bockorny, separate trials were ordered.

Randy Bockorny went on trial first. His trial began on Monday, January 28, 1991, in the courtroom of Multnomah County Circuit Court Judge Robert P. Jones.

In opening statements, Bockorny's lawyer, Kenneth Morrow, blamed Spicer's death on Bockorny's wife, Debra. He said that his client learned that Debra Bockorny was bisexual soon after their marriage in July 1989, and he had expressed his disapproval. He told jurors that both women were naked and had been engaging in sex acts when Debra Bockorny suddenly became angry and stabbed Spicer with a pair of scissors. Morrow said that Debra Bockorny had twice prevented her husband from entering the room where she was having sex with the victim. He said that all three had been drinking heavily on the night of October 6, 1989.

Deputy District Attorney John Bradley told the jury that Deborah Spicer had met the Bockornys at a tavern on the evening of October 6th, after she had had an earlier argument with her boyfriend. At 2:30 a.m., closing time for drinking establishments in Oregon, the trio left the tavern. They stopped at a store to buy beer, then stopped briefly at Spicer's apartment, which she shared with a relative. Afterwards, they went to the Bockornys' house in Gresham.

Prosecutor Bradley contended that both Randy and Debra Bockorny were involved in Spicer's death. He maintained that physical evidence would show that Randy Bockorny had had sex with Spicer before she was killed.

At one point, Randy Bockorny testified in his own defense. He said that he had been drinking all day and all night on October 6th. He said that he twice entered his bedroom, where his wife and Spicer were lying naked on the bed, and his wife twice told him to leave. He said he went into another bedroom and passed out, but was later awakened by a noise.

When he returned to the bedroom where his wife and Spicer were, he found his wife sitting over Spicer's body. He said Spicer had been stabbed





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and Debra Bockorny was holding a pillow over Spicer's head. He said he saw bloody scissors lying on the floor near the bed.

"She told me, 'She's dead, she's dead,'" Randy Bockorny testified. Bockorny said he then threatened to leave his wife, after which she threatened to notify the police and blame Spicer's death on him if he did so. He wanted to leave his wife immediately, he said, but didn't because Debra told him that the police would accuse him of the murder because of his extensive prior record, and that the authorities would believe her over him.

Randy Bockorny also told the jurors that his wife had threatened to shoot him if he tried to interfere with her bisexual adventures. He said he believed her because she had once shot a previous husband and, even though he objected to Debra's bisexual activities, he had learned "to live with it."

During cross-examination, Deputy District Attorney Gregory Horner told the jury that Bockorny had made no attempts to leave his wife anytime after they had fled Oregon.

"Isn't the real reason you never left your wife because you were afraid she would tell the police of your involvement in beating, sodomizing, and killing Miss Spicer?"

"No, Mr. Horner, because I didn't do it," replied Randy Bockorny.

It was pointed out that the victim made a few phone calls to her boyfriend from the Bockornys' house and had asked for help. Bockorny responded that he took the telephone away from her on one occasion and told the man she had been talking to that he'd better not come over or he "would kick his butt." Bockorny said it was his understanding that Spicer was angry with the man she had been talking to and did not want to see him.

After he repeatedly denied having anything to do with killing Deborah Spicer, Bockorny did admit that he had helped his wife dispose of the victim's body by throwing it off a cliff.

"I was scared," said Bockorny. "I was confused. I was just plain numb."

In blaming Spicer's death on Bockorny's wife, Defense Attorney Morrow said that Debra Bockorny was a "mean, volatile, vicious person who goes off the handle and loses all control." He said that Debra Bockorny, who had previously been married four times, had fired a rifle at her first husband, shot her second husband with a handgun, attacked her third husband with a hammer, and

had stabbed Randy Bockorny twice. It was pointed out that the reason she didn't have a criminal record was because her husbands had chosen not to press charges against her.

"The state and you," said Morrow, "have created a classic situation of imposing the death penalty on a person who it may well turn out didn't commit the crimes at all."

On Monday, February 12, 1991, the jury convicted Randall C. Bockorny of aggravated murder. The same jury chose to spare him the death sentence, and instead sentenced him to life in prison with a minimum term of 20 years before parole eligibility.

Debra Bockorny's trial, also heard before a jury in Judge Jones' courtroom, began on Monday, April 1, 1991. During opening statements her attorney, John Uffelman, said that Randy Bockorny had threatened to kill Debra if she did not participate in the sex acts that led to Spicer's death.

Uffelman said Randy Bockorny had demanded that his wife and Spicer remove their clothes and engage in sex. However, he eventually began choking Spicer because he feared that she would notify the police about the forced sex acts. At one point, said Uffelman, Debra Bockorny attempted to pull her husband away from the victim, but was unable to do so.

He also characterized his client as a battered woman who was afraid of her husband. He said she stabbed the victim one time only after being ordered to do so by her husband, while the three lay in bed. He said that the one stab wound she inflicted was only a shallow wound that would not have caused Spicer's death. He contended that the other three stab wounds had been inflicted by Randy Bockorny, and that each subsequent wound had been deeper and more life-threatening than the single wound inflicted by his client.

Uffelman told the jurors that after the

stabbing, Debra went into the living room, leaving Randy in the bedroom with Spicer.

"What happened after she left the room she does not know," said the attorney. Uffelman insisted that Debra Bockorny had no knowledge of Spicer having been sodomized.

Testifying in her own defense, Debra Bockorny admitted that she was sexually attracted to women, but adamantly denied having any sexual interest in Deborah Spicer. She also described how she tried to stop her husband from attacking Spicer.

"I tried to pull him off," testified Bockorny, speaking softly through tears. "I couldn't redirect him....She trusted me to help her and I couldn't stop him." She admitted stabbing Spicer one time after her husband handed her a kitchen knife and demanded that she stab her.

"He said, 'You are going to do this,'" Debra testified. "I said, 'I can't do this.' He said, 'Yes, you can or you will be next.' I really thought he would kill us both." Debra continued to cry through much of her testimony.

At one point, Deputy District Attorney Horner asked the defendant if she recalled telling a friend that she knew how to cry when she wanted or needed sympathy. But Bockorny responded that she did not remember making such a statement to anyone.

"Don't give her a chance to victimize someone else," urged D.A. Horner. "If not the death penalty, don't let her out again."

Despite her excessive crying throughout her trial, Debra Bockorny showed little emotion when the jury returned to announce that they had found her guilty of aggravated murder.

On Wednesday, April 17, 1991, a Multnomah County jury spared Debra Bockorny her life, just as a different jury had done with her husband. However, they weren't as lenient as her husband's jury had been. After failing to find sufficient mitigating factors that would have allowed her a chance of parole after serving 30 years, the jury sentenced Debra Bockorny to life in prison without possibility of parole.

Both Bockornys are now serving their sentences at Oregon correctional institutions. ♦♦♦

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Mike Courtney is not the real name of the person so named in the foregoing story. A fictitious name has been used because there is no reason for public interest in the identity of this person.

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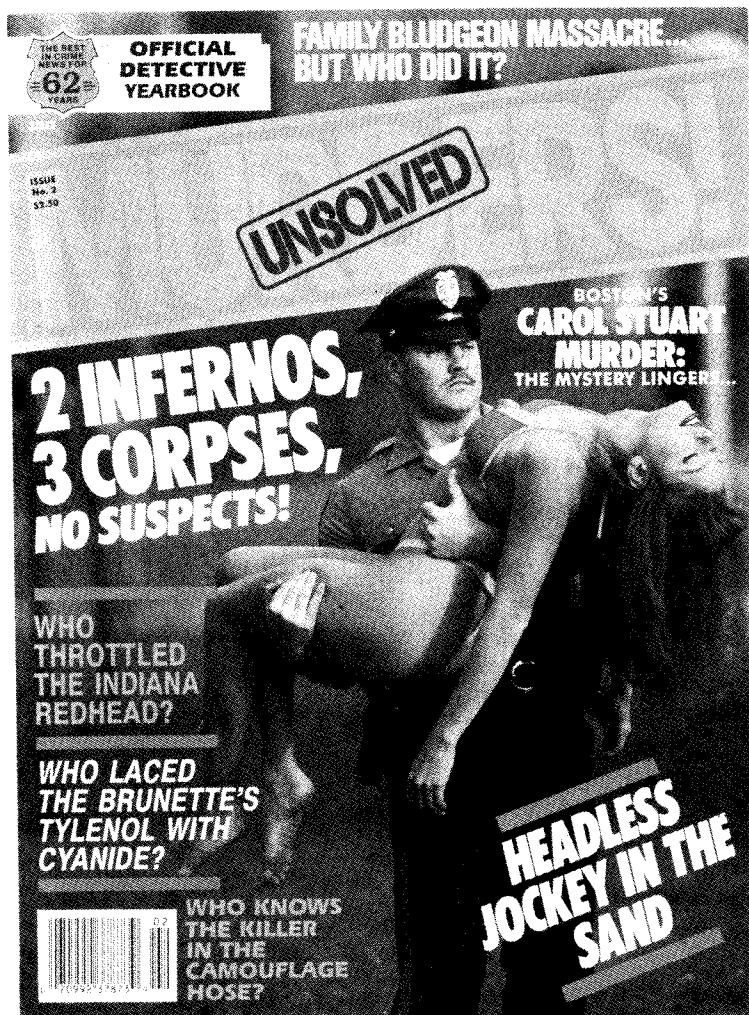


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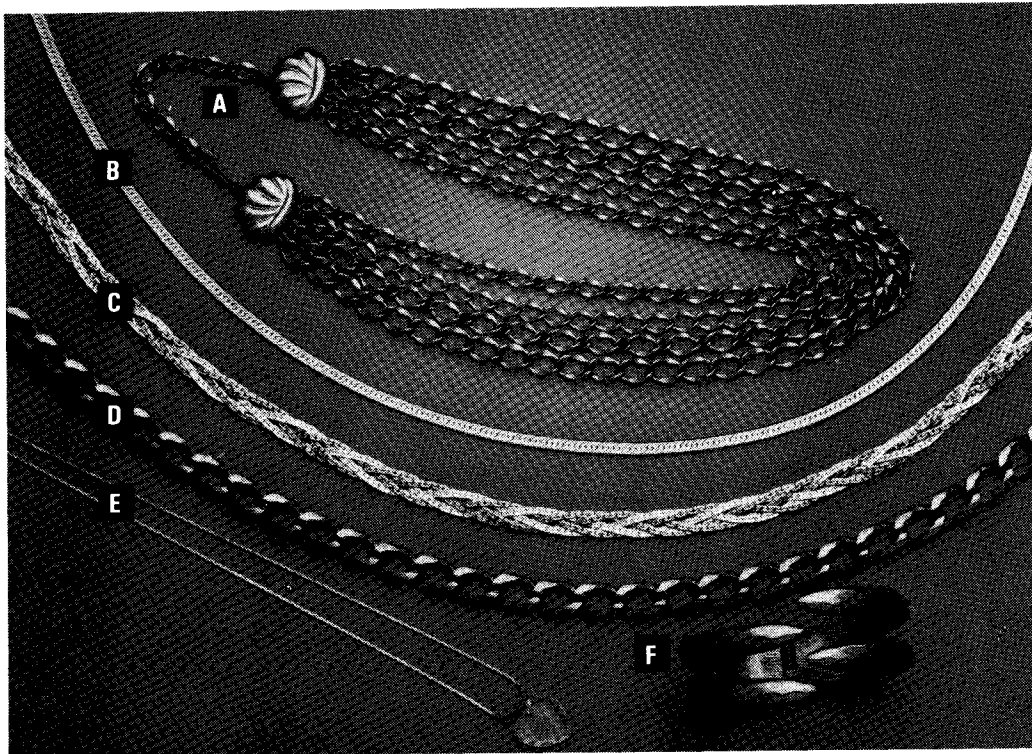
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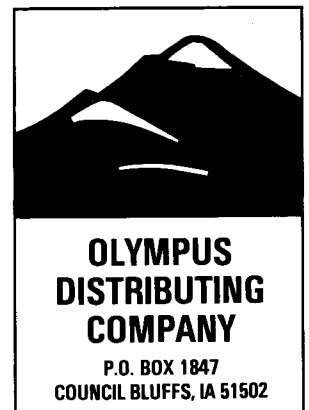
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